



FOOD SECURITY

BELIZE & GUYANA PREPARING TO SUPPLY CARICOM

MOUs IN INVESTMENT, EDUCATION, TOURISM, & SECURITY POISED TO SUPPORT LONG-TERM PROGRESS



"Our future is inextricably linked by our shared histories and the challenges we face today. Together we will unlock the possibilities our people deserve," **PM John Briceño.**

On Sunday February 1, 2026, Prime Minister of Belize, John Briceño welcomed H.E. Dr. Mohammed Irfaan Ali, the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on a historic state visit to the shores of Belize. President Ali was accompanied by Hugh Todd, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Guyana, and Colonel Sheldon Howell, MSM, as well as a delegation of investors and business leaders.

The President arrived at the Philip Goldson International Airport where he was welcomed by Hon. Francis Fonseca, **■ Pg.2**

Water for 14 Communities | Historic MoU in Crooked Tree PCC, Review of Final Report | National ID Bill

■ Inside

NEWLY REFURBISHED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



■ Pg. 4

Restoring History for 5.8 Million



■ Pg. 19

BTL-SMART MERGER | **KNOW THE FACTS** | **Better Cell Coverage and MORE**

BDF & COAST GUARD



New Command, Renewed Service

■ Pg.5



Lee Mark Falls Twice

Panton Pulls JPAC Chair

■ Pg.8

FOOD SECURITY

Continued from page 1

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, H.E. Ambassador Amalia Mai, CEO in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and a ceremonial welcome by the Belize Defence Force Honour Guard.

On Monday, as part of the three-day state visit was the official opening of the newly refurbished National Assembly building and the President of Guyana addressing the joint session of parliament(page 10). In what could be considered a measured and scintillating delivery to parliament, President Ali highlighted the similarities between Belize and Guyana, ‘natural partners’, countries inextricably bound by history, culture and social ties. It was an “occasion that provided Guyana and Belize with a valued opportunity to deepen political dialogue, expand cooperation across, economic, security, cultural, and environmental spheres, and reaffirm the common values and strategic interests that bind our two countries.” As was noted in a Government of Belize press release stating “The visit marks President Ali’s first State Visit to Belize and reflects the strong historical, cultural and social ties, as well as the enduring solidarity and cooperation between Belize and Guyana as sister states within the Caribbean Community.” Prime Minister John Briceño, in welcoming President Ali, acknowledged the strong bilateral relationship between Belize and Guyana and expressed Belize’s confidence in Guyana as a vital regional partner. Briceño described Belize and Guyana as agricultural powerhouses of CARICOM and said Belize consider Guyana as an assured market for Belizean agricultural products, including refined sugar.

Following the address of the joint session of parliament, President Ali and his delegation joined Prime Minister Briceño and members of the government in a courtesy visit to entities of the productive sector. In a government press release, it noted that the first stop was at Santander Sugar Limited in the Cayo District, the location of the Caribbean Sugar Refinery, which is the flagship of the Belize/Guyana initiative, presently being constructed. They later visited Bel-Car in Spanish Lookout and held a discussion regarding the company’s beans, grains, and refined cornmeal processing, as well as market expansion into the Caribbean. Additionally, visits were made to the factory operations at the Quality Poultry Products Headquarters and the Western Dairies Headquarters.

Dr. Ali is CARICOM’s Lead Head of Government with responsibilities for agriculture and his address to parliament on Monday, 1st February focused primarily on Belize and Guyana’s commitment to strengthening agricultural cooperation and dismantling the longstanding regional trade barriers. In his rising, in addressing the joint session of Belize’s National Assembly, President Ali admonished the Caribbean that bureaucracy and artificial trade barriers must no longer be allowed to undermine regional agricultural production, especially as small states, including Belize, invest heavily in food security. Emphasizing, “When we make the human, financial, technological investment in agriculture, the region must in turn have a fair trade system-one in which our production will not be subjected to artificial barriers that disadvantage our farmers.”

Additionally, President Ali warned that the challenges facing the Caribbean region, such as climate change, supply chain disruption and volatile global markets have exposed the Caribbean economies to repeated shocks, calling for trade reforms and regional food production to be treated with utmost urgency. President Ali insisted that “For too long, the region has taken our farmers and our food systems for granted.” Continued saying, “We must push back hard enough to ensure that our food becomes regional food, supported by the systems that encourage and protect our producers.”

Aside from agriculture, Prime Minister John Briceño also reaffirmed both countries’ unwavering commitment to democracy, multilateralism, respect for International law, and the peaceful settlement of disputes, including ongoing territorial matters before the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

The visit culminated in the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) across key areas of mutual interest, including defence and security cooperation, education and skills development, tourism development, and economic engagement. In the area of investment, a Joint Statement of Intent to Negotiate a Bilateral Investment Treaty was issued, signalling the readiness of Belize and Guyana to commence the process towards negotiation and conclusion of a bilateral investment treaty. Both Governments look forward to continued engagement and collaboration in the spirit of friendship, solidarity and regional integration.

On Tuesday January 3rd, 2026, H.E. Dr. Mohammed Irfaan Ali, the President of the Co-operative of the Republic of Guyana concluded his state visit to Belize. The President was escorted to the Philip Goldson International Airport, where he was afforded a warm farewell by H.E. Ambassador Amalia Mai, CEO in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, as well as the Belize Defence Force Honour Guard.

By Hilly Bennett

Guyana Private Sector Delegation Visits Belize

Exploring Investment and Trade Opportunities



Belmopan, Belize, February 2, 2026. Belize and Guyana have taken yet another step toward strengthening regional economic collaboration as the Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE) hosted an information session to welcome the Guyanese private sector delegation, which was part of the State Visit to Belize by H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. The delegation was coordinated by H.E. Gale Miller Garnett, High Commissioner of Belize to Guyana, with the objective of promoting high-level dialogue and connection on investment and trade opportunities between the two nations.

The engagement, held at the Fort George Hotel on Friday, January 30, 2026, brought together Belize’s public and private sectors, including representatives from Belize’s sugar industry and members of the Guyanese delegation to explore areas of mutual interest, particularly in investment, trade, logistics, and agro-processing. The visit underscored the shared commitment of both countries to deepening intra- CARICOM partnerships and advancing sustainable economic growth.

The program featured presentations on Belize’s investment and trade landscape, including priority sectors, investor support services, and export opportunities. Participants also engaged in dialogue on strengthening Belize-Guyana collaboration, leveraging complementary economic strengths, and expanding regional value chains.

Speaking during the engagement, BELTRAIDE highlighted Belize’s strategic position as a gateway between the

Caribbean and Central America, its stable macroeconomic environment, and its investor-friendly framework. Emphasis was also placed on Belize’s commitment to sustainability, resilience, and inclusive growth, principles that align closely with Guyana’s own development trajectory.

The Guyanese delegation shared perspectives on private sector opportunities, logistics, and trade facilitation, identifying areas where collaboration could translate into concrete partnerships and joint ventures.

BELTRAIDE’s Executive Director, Ishmael Quiroz, noted that “Belize recognizes the importance of building strong, practical partnerships within CARICOM. This visit provides a platform to move from dialogue to action, fostering investment and trade relationships that benefit both our countries.”

The visit also builds on the Government of Belize’s consistent track record of investor engagement, including the successful hosting of national investment summits that have generated tangible outcomes and reinforced Belize’s credibility as a destination for strategic and sustainable investment. BELTRAIDE reaffirmed its commitment to facilitating meaningful connections between investors, government agencies, and the private sector, and to supporting initiatives that strengthen economic ties across the CARICOM region.

The session concluded with a networking mixer, allowing participants to engage directly with representatives from BELTRAIDE, the Directorate General for Foreign Trade, the Investment Policy and Compliance Unit, the Economic Development Council, the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Finance Belize, and other public and private sector partners. (release)

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Guyana and Belize Deepen Bilateral Cooperation Through New Memoranda of Understanding

Georgetown / Belmopan, 2nd February 2026

The Governments of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and Belize have reaffirmed their longstanding friendship and shared Caribbean values through the conclusion of a series of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) aimed at strengthening cooperation across key areas of mutual interest.

These agreements reflect the shared commitment of both Governments to peaceful collaboration, respect for sovereignty, and practical cooperation that delivers benefits to their peoples while contributing to regional stability and development.

The MoUs establish broad frameworks for collaboration in areas including defence and security cooperation,

Continued on page 4

The Belize Times

THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE

The Truth Shall Make You Free

www.belize-times.bz | \$1.00

serving Belize since 1957 as the longest continuous newspaper.

Founder: Rt. Hon. George Cadle Price, People’s United Party Leader Emeritus

OFFICE MANAGER
Fay Castillo

EDITOR
José Jiménez

LAYOUT/GRAPHIC ARTIST
Chris Williams

OFFICE ASSISTANT
Roberto Peyrefitte

Printed and Published By
TIMES NEWSPAPER LTD.

Tel: 280-8385

#3 Queen Street

P.O. BOX 506

Belize City, Belize

Email: belizetimesadvertisement@yahoo.com

EDITORIALBELIZE & GUYANA:
IN SYNC YET
PARALLEL

In January and September 1950, British Honduras and British Guiana gave birth to the People's United Party and the People's Progressive Party, respectively. Both Parties went on to lead their nation to independence in 1981 and 1966, respectively. Lyrically, the 1979 Guyanese beat by Tradewinds, 'Not a Blade of Grass' resonates at the Belizean core and at the heartbeat of sovereignty. Many of us have listened avidly to the Belizean version, which underscores how closely the stories of Guyana and Belize are in their efforts to maintain sovereignty and territorial integrity. Today, both countries are defending themselves in ICJ cases of claims on their territory. More subtle yet culture-defining similarities include the fact that both countries thrive on the fringes of the mighty Caribbean Sea, with distinct geographies in Central and South America, respectively. Both countries are bordered to the west by a larger Spanish-speaking country. Other similarities are primarily rooted in history as British colonies and their cultural alignment with the official English-speaking Caribbean. Daily communication in Guyana is based on a creole version of English, sometimes called Creolese, that is derived from African, Indian, and Amerindian languages. Similarly, Belize's 'Kriol' is modern British English influenced by various West African and Bantu languages, as well as by Spanish and the indigenous Miskito and Mayan languages. Both countries affirm a peaceful foreign policy and a peaceful style of living.

On February 1, 2026, Guyanese President Dr Irfaan Ali visited Belize following up on Prime Minister John Briceño's July 5, 2022, visit to Guyana. During the latter visit, both leaders signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the Government of Belize designed to enhance cooperation. This document instructed officials in the respective Ministries to immediately operationalise the MoU and to prepare a joint work programme consistent with the objectives. Regarding discussions on climate change and plans for cooperation in this very important area, their respective experts were to meet urgently to agree on common approaches. Additionally, there was a commitment to collaborate and share experiences and expertise in designing policies to promote economic, social and cultural advancement of their indigenous peoples. Also agreed was that Belize and Guyana would share best practices and expertise in tourism as both countries move to further develop their tourism industry. Both people-centric leaders reaffirmed their firm, reciprocal support for efforts to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of their countries.

PM Briceño and President Ali are fresh off General Election mandates in 2025, and President Ali chose to come to Belize early in 2026 to honour the commitments while signing more detailed Memoranda of Understanding. The MoUs outlined collaboration in investment, trade, defence and security, education and skills development, and tourism promotion and investment. All MoUs are guided by mutual respect, equality, reciprocity, and noninterference, and comply with respective national laws and regional obligations. In the investment area, a Joint Statement of Intent to Negotiate a Bilateral Investment Treaty was issued. Belize and Guyana will commence negotiations and work toward the successful conclusion of a bilateral investment treaty. In defence and security, cooperation will focus on capacity-building, information exchange, training, and dialogue to address shared challenges, including transnational organised crime, drug trafficking, terrorism, and other emerging security threats. This will support institutional capabilities while supporting peace and stability in the wider Caribbean region. In education, the Governments have committed to expanding opportunities for scholarships, academic exchange, and skills development, including access to digital learning platforms. A new generation is always being educated, and this is the mindset. In tourism cooperation, joint initiatives involve knowledge-sharing and sustainable tourism development. This furthers opportunities for multi-destination travel, capacity-building, and diaspora engagement, with the goal of supporting economic growth and cultural exchange. Currently, Belize is in a concerted push to digitalise, and the MoU on digital transformation and an artificial intelligence framework is welcomed in the quest for greater efficiency, effectiveness, and implementation capacity.

Belize and Guyana have both experienced economic growth over the past five years. Guyana struck oil, while Belize achieved transparency, accountability, and efficiency through planBelize—a model now used in other countries, such as planMexico. As a result, both countries lead the hemisphere in Gross Domestic Product growth rate over the last five years, for the reasons mentioned. The MOUs will further enhance government performance in serving citizens. Both governments aim to strengthen bilateral relations, foster institutional collaboration, and promote inclusive, sustainable development, all while adhering to Caribbean priorities. These efforts will be implemented transparently, in line with available resources and national priorities, and will benefit citizens. Additionally, Belize has confirmed its intention to join the Global Biodiversity Alliance, launched by the President of Guyana in July 2025. This open, non-binding platform seeks to expand financial opportunities and cooperation by raising awareness of the biodiversity crisis and its links to climate change.

Therefore, within all the similarities, Belize's and Guyana's governments first seek to better the quality of life of their own people. The friendship and regional integration efforts of Prime Minister Briceño and President Ali exemplify how bilateral summits can benefit citizens and advance regional agreements. The leaders now return home to continue nation-building. In Belize, we say we are 'Right Pan Track'.

*en Español*BELICE Y GUYANA:
SINCRONIZADOS PERO
PARALELOS

En enero y septiembre de 1950, Honduras Británica y Guayana Británica dieron origen, respectivamente, al Partido Unido del Pueblo y al Partido Popular Progresista. Ambos partidos llevaron a sus respectivas naciones a la independencia en 1981 y 1966, respectivamente. En términos líricos, el ritmo guyanés de 1979 de Tradewinds, «Not a Blade of Grass», resuena en el corazón de Belice y en el latido de la soberanía. Muchos de nosotros hemos escuchado con avidez la versión beliceña, que subraya lo cercanas que son las historias de Guyana y Belice en sus esfuerzos por mantener la soberanía y la integridad territorial. Hoy en día, ambos países se defienden ante la CIJ en casos por reclamaciones sobre su territorio. Otras similitudes más sutiles, pero que definen su cultura, incluyen que ambos países prosperan en los márgenes del poderoso mar Caribe, con geografías distintas en América Central y América del Sur, respectivamente. Ambos países limitan al oeste con un país hispanohablante más grande. Otras similitudes se basan principalmente en su historia como colonias británicas y en su alineación cultural con el Caribe anglófono oficial. La comunicación diaria en Guyana se basa en una variante criolla del inglés, a veces llamada creolés, que deriva de las lenguas africanas, indias y amerindias. Del mismo modo, el «kriol» de Belice es un inglés británico moderno influenciado por varias lenguas de África occidental y bantúes, así como por el español y por las lenguas indígenas miskito y maya. Ambos países afirman una política exterior pacífica y un estilo de vida pacífico.

El 1 de febrero de 2026, el presidente de Guyana, Dr. Irfaan Ali, visitó Belice como continuación de la visita del primer ministro John Briceño a Guyana el 5 de julio de 2022. Durante esa visita, ambos líderes firmaron un memorando de entendimiento (MoU) entre la República Cooperativa de Guyana y el Gobierno de Belice destinado a mejorar la cooperación. Este documento instruyó a los funcionarios de los respectivos ministerios a poner en práctica de inmediato el MoU y a preparar un programa de trabajo conjunto, coherente con los objetivos. En cuanto a los debates sobre el cambio climático y los planes de cooperación en este ámbito tan importante, sus respectivos expertos debían reunirse con urgencia para acordar enfoques comunes. Además, se comprometió a colaborar y compartir experiencias y conocimientos especializados en el diseño de políticas para promover el avance económico, social y cultural de sus pueblos indígenas. También se acordó que Belice y Guyana compartirían las mejores prácticas y conocimientos especializados en materia de turismo, ya que ambos países avanzan hacia un mayor desarrollo de su industria turística. Ambos líderes, centrados en las personas, reafirmaron su firme y recíproco apoyo a los esfuerzos por preservar la soberanía y la integridad territorial de sus países.

El primer ministro Briceño y el presidente Ali acaban de salir de las elecciones generales de 2025, y el presidente Ali decidió venir a Belice a principios de 2026 para cumplir los compromisos y firmar memorandos de entendimiento más detallados. Los memorandos de entendimiento esbozaban la colaboración en materia de inversión, comercio, defensa y seguridad, educación y desarrollo de competencias y promoción e inversión en turismo. Todos los memorandos de entendimiento se rigen por el respeto mutuo, la igualdad, la reciprocidad y la no injerencia y cumplen con las leyes nacionales y las obligaciones regionales aplicables. En el ámbito de la inversión, se emitió una declaración conjunta de intenciones para negociar un tratado bilateral de inversión. Belice y Guyana iniciarán las negociaciones y trabajarán para concluir con éxito un tratado bilateral de inversión. En materia de defensa y seguridad, la cooperación se centrará en el desarrollo de capacidades, el intercambio de información, la formación y el diálogo para abordar retos comunes, como la delincuencia organizada transnacional, el tráfico de drogas, el terrorismo y otras amenazas emergentes para la seguridad. Esto reforzará las capacidades institucionales y contribuirá a la paz y la estabilidad en toda la región del Caribe. En materia de educación, los gobiernos se han comprometido a ampliar las oportunidades de becas, intercambios académicos y desarrollo de competencias, incluido el acceso a plataformas de aprendizaje digital. Siempre hay una nueva generación en formación y esa es la mentalidad. En materia de cooperación turística, las iniciativas conjuntas incluyen el intercambio de conocimientos y el desarrollo del turismo sostenible. Esto fomenta oportunidades de viaje a múltiples destinos, el desarrollo de capacidades y la participación de la diáspora, con el objetivo de apoyar el crecimiento económico y el intercambio cultural. Actualmente, Belice está realizando un esfuerzo concertado para digitalizarse, y el memorando de entendimiento sobre la transformación digital y un marco de inteligencia artificial es bienvenido en la búsqueda de una mayor eficiencia, eficacia y capacidad de implementación.

Tanto Belice como Guyana han experimentado crecimiento económico en los últimos cinco años. Guyana descubrió petróleo, mientras que Belice logró transparencia, rendición de cuentas y eficiencia a través del planBelice, un modelo que ahora se utiliza en otros países, como el planMéxico. Como resultado, ambos países lideran el hemisferio en la tasa de crecimiento del producto interior bruto en los últimos cinco años, por las razones mencionadas. Los memorandos de entendimiento mejorarán aún más el desempeño del gobierno en el servicio a los ciudadanos. Ambos gobiernos tienen como objetivo fortalecer las relaciones bilaterales, fomentar la colaboración institucional y promover el desarrollo inclusivo y sostenible, todo ello respetando las prioridades del Caribe. Estos esfuerzos se llevarán a cabo de forma transparente, en consonancia con los recursos disponibles y las prioridades nacionales, y beneficiarán a los ciudadanos. Además, Belice ha confirmado su intención de unirse a la Alianza Mundial para la Biodiversidad, puesta en marcha por el presidente de Guyana en julio de 2025. Esta plataforma abierta y no vinculante busca ampliar las oportunidades financieras y la cooperación mediante la sensibilización sobre la crisis de la biodiversidad y sus vínculos con el cambio climático.

Por lo tanto, entre todas las similitudes, los gobiernos de Belice y Guyana tienen como objetivo mejorar la calidad de vida de sus ciudadanos. La amistad y los esfuerzos de integración regional del primer ministro Briceño y el presidente Ali ejemplifican cómo las cumbres bilaterales pueden beneficiar a los ciudadanos y promover los acuerdos regionales. Los líderes regresan ahora a sus países para continuar la construcción de la nación. En Belice, decimos que «Vamos bien».

MODERN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BUILDING SIGNALS TO A NATION'S PROGRESS

\$5.8 million Renovation

On February 3, 2026, Belize took a significant step into the future with the completion of a \$5.8 million renovation of the National Assembly Building in Belmopan, marking the most *extensive transformation of the historic structure since it first opened fifty-six years ago*. The modernization project, supported by **funding from Taiwan** and additional investment from the Government of Belize, reflects what officials describe as a clear commitment to strengthening democratic governance while improving accessibility, efficiency, and working conditions for lawmakers, staff, and the Belizean public.

Standing at the heart of the capital city since Belmopan's creation, the National Assembly Building has long symbolized Belize's democratic governance. Officials acknowledged the need for urgent modernization to ensure that the facility could meet the demands of a modern parliamentary system. The renovation was designed to preserve the building's iconic architecture while introducing upgrades that reflect a government focused on delivering effective service for the people.

House Speaker Valerie Woods emphasized that the project represents a major leap forward in improving the functionality and inclusiveness of Parliament. *"We are in 2026, and what we were working with, and Madam President can concur the same for her experience in her chamber, was a lot of archaic equipment,"* Woods said. *"The workflow was not optimal. The space was not optimal... So, modernization, accessibility, inclusivity, preservation of the heritage of the building."*

One of the most notable upgrades is the installation of a new elevator on the first floor, a feature that significantly improves accessibility for individuals with mobility challenges. The renovation also reorganized key parliamentary operations by bringing together important offices, including those of the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, alongside upgraded filing systems and modern workspace environments for administrative staff. These improvements are expected to streamline operations and enhance efficiency across both chambers of the National Assembly.

The financial investment behind the project reflects the government's long-term vision for strengthening Belize's democratic institutions. Taiwan provided an initial grant of \$1.5 million, while the Government of Belize funded the remaining \$4.2 million required to complete the project. Chief Engineer at the Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing, Evondale Moody, explained that the expanded scope of work was always anticipated, given the building's age and structural requirements.

"With respect to the cost of the project, we must bear in mind that from the onset we knew the project would not have cost one point five million dollars," Moody said. *"That was just a grant from Taiwan... The original estimates were already higher than that. And so based on the works we were able to undertake, in the end that figure came out to five point eight million."*

Moody added that the renovation carefully balanced modernization with preservation, ensuring the building retained its historic identity while in-



corporating state-of-the-art improvements. He also addressed critics who questioned the overall cost of the project, encouraging them to examine the extensive scope of work completed.

The transformation of the main parliamentary chamber represents one of the most visible changes. The layout has been refreshed with improved lighting and modern design elements. The replacement of outdated wooden seating with more ergonomic chairs ensures that lawmakers can comfortably endure lengthy parliamentary sessions, which often extend for several hours.

President of the Senate Carolyn Trench Sandiford said, *"In terms of the seating arrangement and the shift from the older chairs to what we have now, the Senate, from our perspective, does sit very long hours."* She continued, *"You cannot expect parliamentarians to robustly debate a bill in an uncomfortable space."*

Members' rooms located behind the main chamber have also been upgraded to provide separate modern facilities for Government, Opposition, and Independent Sen-

ators. The inclusion of furniture, artwork from Belize's national art collection, and functional meeting spaces reflects efforts to maintain Belizean cultural identity while improving the overall work environment for legislators.

The third-floor renovation focused heavily on enhancing public participation and media coverage of parliamentary proceedings. The public gallery now offers improved seating arrangements and wheelchair accessibility, ensuring that citizens can more comfortably observe legislative debates. Media personnel, who previously operated in cramped and uncomfortable conditions, now benefit from upgraded workspaces designed to support accurate and efficient reporting.

Beyond physical improvements, the project represents a statement about governance itself. The modernization of the National Assembly underscores a government committed to strengthening democratic institutions while preserving Belize's national heritage. It also highlights the importance of investing in infrastructure that supports transparency, accountability, and public engagement.

As Belize's Parliament begins operating within its newly restored



environment, the upgraded National Assembly Building stands as a symbol of national progress—demonstrating that the country is stepping confidently into the future under leadership focused on delivering meaningful results for the Belizean people. - EF

Guyana and Belize Deepen Bilateral Cooperation Through New Memoranda of Understanding

Continued from page 2

education and skills development, tourism development, and economic engagement. They are guided by the principles of **mutual respect, equality, reciprocity, and noninterference**, and are consistent with both countries' national laws and regional obligations under CARICOM.

In the area of **defence and security**, the Governments have agreed to enhance cooperation focused on capacity-building, information exchange, training, and dialogue to address shared challenges such as transnational organised crime, drug trafficking, terrorism, and other emerging security threats. This cooperation is defensive in nature, non-binding, and aimed at strengthening institutional capabilities while supporting peace and stability in the wider Caribbean region.

In **education**, the Governments have committed to expanding opportunities for scholarships, academic exchange, and skills development, including access to digital learning platforms. These initiatives are intended to deepen people-to-people ties and invest in human capital for future generations.

The **tourism cooperation framework** seeks to promote joint initiatives, knowledge-sharing, and sustainable tourism development, including opportunities for multi-destination travel, capacity-building, and diaspora engagement, with the goal of supporting economic growth and cultural exchange.

The **digital transformation and artificial intelligence** framework seeks to improve government efficiency, effectiveness, and implementation capacity.

In the area of **investment**, a Joint Statement of Intent to Negotiate a Bilateral Investment Treaty was issued, signaling the readiness of Belize and Guyana to commence the process towards negotiation and successful conclusion of a bilateral investment treaty.

Together, these understandings form part of a broader effort by both Governments to strengthen bilateral relations, encourage collaboration between institutions, and promote inclusive and sustainable development in keeping with shared Caribbean priorities.

The Governments of Guyana and Belize emphasise that these Memoranda of Understanding express mutual intentions to cooperate and do not create legally binding obligations. All cooperation will be implemented gradually, transparently, and in accordance with available resources and national priorities.

Belize has confirmed its intention to join the Global Biodiversity Alliance, which was launched by the President of Guyana in July 2025. The Alliance is an open, non-binding platform that seeks to expand financial opportunities and cooperation by raising awareness of the biodiversity crisis and its linkages to climate change.

Both Governments look forward to continued engagement and collaboration in the spirit of friendship, solidarity, and regional integration.

NEW COMMAND, RENEWED SERVICE

Belize's national security architecture entered a new chapter with leadership transitions at both the Belize Coast Guard (BCG) and the Belize Defence Force (BDF), marking milestones of continuity, professionalism, and national pride. The dual events underscored the Ministry of National Defence & Border Security's commitment to strong leadership while celebrating the dedication of those who have served with distinction. The occasion was further highlighted by the graduation of 150 new BDF recruits, reinforcing the future strength of the nation's armed forces.

Belize Coast Guard: Guarding the Maritime Domain

After six years at the helm, the Belize Coast Guard formally ushered in a new era of leadership at a ceremonial change-of-command ceremony at its headquarters in Belize City. Captain Gregory Soberanis officially assumed command as Commandant and was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral, succeeding Rear Admiral Elton Bennett.

Minister of National Defence & Border Security, Hon. Florencio Marin Jr., expressed full confidence in the new Commandant, stating that the Ministry was assured of Soberanis' ability to safeguard Belize's maritime domain and further advance the Coast Guard's operational readiness and professionalism. Chief Executive Officer, Major (Ret'd) Francis Usher, echoed that confidence, noting that the leadership transition reflected institutional continuity built on years of strategic investment and training.

Rear Admiral Soberanis, who served as Vice-Commandant since 2019, said his ascension was the culmination of deliberate professional development within the force. *"This is a moment our career development prepares you for,"* he said. *"The institution and the Government of Belize invest in officers, so there is continuity of command and leadership for the future."*

With a distinguished academic background, including graduation with honours from the United States Naval War College and a Master's Degree in International Strategic Studies from the National Defense University, Soberanis outlined a forward-looking vision for the Coast Guard. He emphasized deeper collaboration with domestic and international partners, cultural transformation within the organization, and adaptability to evolving maritime threats. *"Greater cooperation will allow us to be more effective, efficient, and productive in protecting our maritime domain,"* he said.

Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, *"Mr. Soberanis, he is quite an impressive gentleman, and I said I was quite impressed when he recited The Lord is My Shepherd with such vigor, such confidence, and such emotion. That kind of gives you a little sense of the man. There is a Christian man, a man who believes in God. And I believe that once you have those basic strong principles in you, it allows you to be able to serve the people, to serve the Coast Guard and the sailors and the people of Belize to the best possibilities."*

The Ministry also paid tribute to outgoing Commandant Rear Admiral Elton Bennett, whose six-year tenure strengthened the Coast Guard's institutional capacity and regional standing. Minister Marin acknowledged Bennett's *"steadfast leadership and exemplary service,"* noting that his contributions have left the force better equipped to meet modern maritime security challenges.

Belize Defence Force: Leadership and Legacy

The Belize Defence Force simultaneously marked its 48th Anniversary with a time-honoured Change of Command ceremony at the Sir Colville Young Parade Square at Price Barracks. In a formal military parade steeped in tradition, Brigadier General Anthony Velasquez officially assumed command as Commander of the BDF, succeeding Brigadier General Azariel Loria.



Minister Marin congratulated Brigadier General Velasquez on his appointment, describing it as a testament to a career defined by dedication, discipline, and service. CEO Francis Usher reaffirmed the Ministry's unwavering support, expressing confidence that the BDF would continue to uphold its proud legacy and strengthen its role in defending Belize's sovereignty under the new Commander's leadership.

Addressing the force, Brigadier General Velasquez pledged principled leadership and unity. *"To the soldiers of the Belize Defence Force, your discipline, courage, commitment, and sacrifice are the backbone of this institution,"* he said. *"As your commander, I pledge to lead with integrity, clarity, and unwavering dedication. Together, we will strengthen this force, protect our nation, and build a future worthy of Belize."*

Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, *"This anniversary provides us another opportunity to declare that we remain strong, resilient, and ready to protect our nation and our values. Over the past year, the BDF has demonstrated once again that it is a force that rises to every challenge. When our northern frontier demanded heightened vigilance, the BDF responded; our message was clear. Belize will always defend its borders. When the Belize Police Department required enforcement to maintain law and order in your streets, in Belize City, the BDF stepped up and deployed to support our police."*

Velasquez's journey with the BDF began in 1992 as a private soldier, a path he described as one filled with purpose and meaning. *"Our unwavering dedication to service and our faith has become part of who we are,"* he added, reaffirming his lifelong commitment to the force and country.

Outgoing Commander Brigadier General Azariel Loria reflected on his four-year tenure, highlighting key achievements in improving salaries, emoluments, and military culture. *"We implemented systematic changes that have visibly improved our work ethic and strengthened the core values we hold dear,"* Loria said, describing the period as demanding but rewarding.

150 New Soldiers Welcomed

The celebrations culminated on January 30, 2026, with pride and emotion as 150 recruits officially joined the ranks of the Belize Defence Force. The passing-out parade at Price Barracks marked the successful completion of 17 weeks of rigorous training for an intake comprising six women and 144 men.

Family members and dignitaries watched as the recruits marched in disciplined formation, symbolizing their transition from civilians to soldiers entrusted with the defence of Belize. The Ministry of National Defence & Border Security congratulated the graduates, welcoming them into the BDF family and commending their commitment to service.

As leadership transitions at both the BDF and BCG align with the graduation of new soldiers, Belize's defence institutions stand reinforced by experience, renewed command, and fresh ranks—united by the guiding principles of **Service, Strength, and Sovereignty**.

NOTICE

GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE TREASURY BILLS ISSUE NUMBER 2/2026

Tenders are invited for an issue of Government of Belize Treasury Bills. The amount of the issue will be \$64,391,800.00.

The Bills will be issued in electronic form only evidenced by an electronic book entry in the Central Securities Depository (CSD) of the Central Bank of Belize in multiples of \$200 and will be repayable at par 91 days after issue. They will be issued on Tuesday, 20 January 2026 and will be redeemed on Tuesday 21 April 2026.

Each tender must be for \$200 or a multiple of \$200. Bid yields must be submitted to five decimal places.

Members of the public who wish to participate in the auction must submit their bid to the Central Bank of Belize electronically to bids@centralbank.org.bz or at the designated drop off box no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, 16 January 2026.

The auction in the CSD will be opened from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm on Friday 20 January 2026.

Successful bidders should arrange to settle via the Automated Payment & Securities Settlement System of Belize (APSSS).

Bank: Central Bank of Belize
Account: GLICORP0402627

The Government of Belize reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all tenders in whole or in part.

CENTRAL BANK OF BELIZE

Notices are placed on Central Bank of Belize Website (www.centralbank.org.bz)

2 January 2026

VACANCY NOTICE LIBRARIAN

High Court Library - High Court of Belize

Salary/ Pay Scale: Pay Scale 9 - \$16,980 x \$816 - \$32,494

The Senior Courts of Belize invites suitably qualified applicants to fill the post of Librarian, responsible for the effective management of the Supreme Court Library and its holdings.

Key Duties (Summary):

- Acquire and maintain law journals, case and textbooks, periodicals, publications and judgments.
- Regulate use of the Library by attorneys-at-law, court prosecutors and paralegals (with support of the Assistant Librarian).
- Maintain catalogue/cardex and inventory systems for all library materials, chattels and equipment.
- Arrange repairs of books and equipment and ensure proper upkeep of the Library.
- Serve as Liaison Officer with the Solicitor General's Office.
- Conduct legal/library research for Judges and approved users, as requested.
- Maintain an up-to-date computer database of all library books and texts.

Qualifications / Requirements:

- Library coding and cataloguing skills.
- Computer literacy and ability to maintain library databases.
- Knowledge of legal terminology and strong research capability.
- Excellent public relations and customer-service skills.
- Ability to work efficiently without supervision and work well with others.
- Paralegal Studies would be an asset.
- Minimum five (5) years' experience in a related field.
- Applicants should be 25 years and older.

How to Apply:

All applications must be submitted by email and addressed to the following emails:

DPatterson@registry.gov.bz dpatterson@belizejudiciary.org
KBrooks@registry.gov.bz, kbrooks@belizejudiciary.org

Deadline for Submission: 28 February 2026

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.



REQUEST FOR BID
(GOODS)



ACQUISITION OF LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

Institution: Ministry of Finance
Country: Belize
Project: Belize Blue Cities and Beyond Project
Process ID: BZ-MFEDI - CEU-521381-GO-RFQ
Deadline: February 23, 2026; 10:00 a.m. (Local Belize Time)

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received loan financing from the World Bank for the Belize Blue Cities and Beyond Project, being implemented by the Ministry of Finance.

The Ministry of Finance, through its Central Executing Unit, intends to allocate a portion of the project’s proceeds of the Belize Blue Cities and Beyond Project for the procurement and delivery of **Lab Equipment and Resources** (hereinafter called “Goods”), to support project implementation, as follows:

No.	Goods	Quantity
Lot 1	Field & Safety Equipment	Available in the bidding document
Lot 2	Water Quality Instruments	Available in the bidding document
Lot 3	Drones & Imaging	Available in the bidding document

Bidders may submit a bid for **One Lot or for All Lots**. Each bid must include every item within the selected lot to be considered responsive.

The Ministry of Finance invites bidders to access the complete bidding document at <https://mof.gov.bz/procurement-opportunities/> or by scanning the QR code below, and to submit bids in accordance with the instructions provided in the bidding document.

ATTN:
Procurement Specialist
Ministry of Finance
2nd Floor, Sir Edney Cain Building, Belmopan

Tel: 501-822-4106
procurement@ceu.mof.gov.bz



REQUEST FOR BID
(GOODS)



ACQUISITION OF PROJECT VEHICLES

Institution: Ministry of Finance
Country: Belize
Project: Belize Blue Cities and Beyond Project
Process ID: BZ-CEU-460796-GO-RFB
Deadline: February 23, 2026; 10:00 a.m. (Local Belize Time)

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received loan financing from the World Bank for the Belize Blue Cities and Beyond Project, being implemented by the Ministry of Finance.

The Ministry of Finance, through its Central Executing Unit, intends to allocate a portion of the proceeds of the Belize Blue Cities and Beyond Project toward the procurement and delivery of **Vehicles and Related Equipment** (hereinafter called “Goods”), to support project implementation, as follows:

No.	Goods	Quantity
Lot 1	Upgraded Pickup Trucks	5
Lot 2	Upgraded Pickup Truck (MT)	1
Lot 3	Utility Pickup Trucks	5
Lot 4	All-terrain 4x4 pickup trucks	1
Lot 5	SUVs	3
Lot 6	PHEV SUVs	2
Lot 7	Vessel with Engines and Trailer	1

Bidders may submit a bid for **One Lot or for All Lots**. Each bid must include every item within the selected lot to be considered responsive.

The Ministry of Finance invites bidders to access the complete bidding document at <https://mof.gov.bz/procurement-opportunities/> or by scanning the QR code below, and to submit bids in accordance with the instructions provided in the bidding document.

ATTN:
Procurement Specialist
Ministry of Finance
2nd Floor, Sir Edney Cain Building, Belmopan
Tel: 501-822-4106
procurement@ceu.mof.gov.bz



CARTOON

YELLOW T.I.P.S; UDP HAY NO COME BACK, FH COME BACK



**Joint Sitting of the House of
Representatives & Senate
State Visit
DR. MOHAMED
IRFAAN ALI,
President of the Cooperative
Republic of Guyana
PRIME MINISTER
JOHN BRICENO
At Newly Refurbished National
Assembly Building, Belmopan
February 2, 2026**

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madame President of the Senate, Honorable Members of the House of Representatives, Honorable Members of the Senate, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, members of the media, and most especially His Excellency Dr. Muhammad Irfaan Ali, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana. On behalf of the National Assembly and the people of Belize, it is my distinct honor and pleasure to welcome you once again to our nation's capital, Belmopan, and to this joint sitting of the National Assembly.

This honorable House is the place where the nation of Belize or proud homeland was born. History records, Madame Speaker, that this hallowed place, the independent secretariat, where all the planning and the formal ceremonies and joyous celebrations on the occasion of our independence in 1981, was housed downstairs. But a small dedicated team worked endless hours to ensure that arrangements were in place for us to seamlessly emerge from colony to nation as the land of the free by the Carib Sea. On Independence Day, the 21st day of September 1981, in a unique act the national assembly met here and passed the Belize constitution. Unlike other CARICOM nations whose founding documents continues to this day to be the instruments passed by the United Kingdom Parliament. Our founding leaders met, debated, and passed our own constitution. It was not merely ceremony, nor was it empty symbolism. It was a defining act of self-determination by a people who has struggled for decades to be sovereign free. By passing the constitution as a Belizean law, we commenced the process of decolonization. We affirmed our national dignity as a sovereign democratic state of Central America in the Caribbean region.

President, His Excellency Dr. Irfaan Ali, my friend, welcome to Belize and to our humble home on Independence Hill. Your visit the first state visit by a President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana is history making. It is also it also builds on the 2022 memorandum of understanding on cooperation signed by at State House in Georgetown, Guyana. The several memorandums of understanding we will sign today cover diverse areas of education, tourism, digitization and agriculture. They cover social, economic and productive sectors of our countries. They provide solid



bases for deeper collaboration in areas of mutual benefit. We offer our experience in tourism as you build your tourism product in the land of many waters. Our geographic similarities provide scope for knowledge sharing. Our expertise in agriculture will be made available and educational opportunities explored. Your experience in digitization will help us in our

own efforts in this regard.

Belize and Guyana must move deliberately to achieve our mutual ambition to feed car. The revised treaty of Chaguaramas provides this legal framework for free movement of goods within CARICOM. We must leverage our abundant resources, facilitate private sector investment, and reap the benefits of our people. We share a history shaped by sugar. Fields were plowed and cane cut by indentured labor and sugar exported to Europe by nationalists. As the industry evolved, it provided jobs, educated our children, earned foreign exchange and drew of the development of our colonial societies.

But that was yesterday. Today, we will jointly facilitate private sector investment in the refined sugar sector. Sugar remains an agricultural mainstay for both Belize and Guyana. As governments, we will assure the private sector that we will work diligently to ensure that CARICOM is an assured market for Belize and Guyanese producers of refined sugar.

This building first used on 9th October 1970 was designed to accommodate 18 members but for two decades our house of representatives consists of 31 members. Renewal, renovation, repurposing was overdue. Madame President, in the name of the government and people of Belize, permit me to offer our sincere gratitude to the government of the Republic of China, Taiwan, for their significant grant which made this impressive renovation possible. Our two nations continue to enjoy deep bonds, bonds of friendship, fraternity and freedom. Our shared values, respect for self-determination, multilateralism, human rights and democracy are universal principles which remain unshaken. We are very grateful and thankful and offer thanks to the teams and individuals under the excellent leadership of the Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing who labored to transform the building by dent of their industry. We are now able to do the

Continued on page 10

**Joint Sitting of the House of
Representatives & Senate
Excerpts of Principal
Address
DR. MOHAMED
IRFAAN ALI,
President of the Cooperative Republic
of Guyana on State Visit
At Newly Refurbished National
Assembly Building, Belmopan
February 2, 2026**

The Honorable President of the Senate, Honorable Colin Trench Sandiford, and Honorable Senators, the Honorable Speaker of the House of Representatives, Valerie Woods, the Honorable Prime Minister, John Briceño, and members of the Cabinet, the Honorable Leader of the Opposition, and members of

the House of Representatives, Special Envoy, Her Excellency, Rossana Briceño, members of the Diplomatic Corps, and invited guests. It is a great honor to stand before this Assembly in the spirit of friendship and shared purpose that has long united Belize and Guyana. From the moment of our arrival, my delegation and I have felt not only the warmth of the Belizean hospitality, but the easy familiarity of a Caribbean family welcoming one of its own....

Our two countries possess some of the most diverse and valuable ecosystems in the Caribbean, encompassing vast tracts of tropical forests, extensive freshwater resources, and extraordinary biodiversity that place us among the world's most environmentally significant small states. Our territories include critical habitats that support unique flora and fauna, provide essential ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration and climate regulation, and sustain livelihoods through agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and ecotourism. At the same time, these natural endowments carry global responsibilities....

Above all, Belize and Guyana share a principled commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes. We have consistently chosen dialogue over confrontation and law over force. In this spirit, both our nations place confidence in the rule of international law and in established legal and diplomatic processes as a means by which differences are resolved....

Transnational crime, including the illicit trafficking of drugs, weapons, and people, undermines stability and corrodes institutions. These challenges facing small states in our hemisphere are becoming more acute and more complex. Climate change continues to threaten coastlines, food systems, and water security.

Energy insecurity and volatility in global markets expose our economies to shocks beyond our control. Food insecurity, driven by climate



events and external disruptions, places additional strain on vulnerable populations. That is why, Prime Minister, my dear friend, I agree with you that Belize and Guyana must lead in the food security of this region....

We must push back hard now to ensure that our food becomes a region food by a system that encourages and

supports this. As I said, climate change continues to threaten coastlines, food systems, and water security. Food insecurity, driven by climate events and external disruptions, place additional strain on vulnerable populations....

First, we must continue to deepen regional cooperation, and we must look at best practices in the region itself. And we must be able not only to look at those best practices but to embrace those practices, build capacity among each other, advance capacity among each other. And that is what Belize and Guyana, that is what we are celebrating here today.

The exchange of ideas, technology, and systems that are localized, that are proven to be effective within our own ecosystem. And when we trust each other to transfer our localized technology to support the growth and development of each other, we become stronger, more resilient, and definitely more independent. And that is what we celebrate today....

We must not shoot ourselves down by saying to the world our educational system is no good. Yes, there might be challenges, but it is the same education system that is providing the nurses, the doctors, the technicians, the construction workers that they seek after. Unless as a collective, we recreate minds of positivity and advance stories of success, we'll forever be in that state of mental slavery. And this is something Belize and Guyana must champion. We have developed a digital school that is now available for all of the region. Our education system must continue to improve to meet the needs of our regional children. And our regional children and regional parents must trust what we build. Must trust what we build and use what we build in this region. By acting collectively, small states are better able to negotiate from a position of confidence and to speak with a unified and constructive voice in global affairs.

This enhanced influence strengthens resilience and expands opportunity. Regional integration also creates a broader and more assured economic space with-

Continued on page 10

Lee Mark Falls Twice

Panton Pulls JPAC Chair

In 2020, the UDP was asked to Go and 5 more times in national elections the same was repeated in mass fashion and they are stubborn. Today the remnants of the 2005 criminals are rearing their ugly heads and drunk with nostalgia. They expect the new voters that today who are between 18 and 32 will fall for their violent antics that obviously make no sense. The UDP have NO COMEBACK fih COMEBACK!

The youth of today KNOW technology and what the merger will do for the speed of their game consoles and their RPG scores. Many of these game-heads do not want to be a passenger in a vehicle and have their internet drop. The people of Belize who vote are NOT the same as those in 2005 who only saw a Yellow goon, annoyed with his life, twisting his arms ala Finny on cable TV. You all memba cable?

Faber plus belly feigning to run and attempting to revive UB at SSB is lame. Note how no one tried to carry him off. Instead Lee Mark pulled him back and in the process pulled both him and Faber unto the curb. The Police obviously had no stake in Faber's center of gravity being changed by a tugging Lee Mark. The Mesop rep was most likely thinking: "You guys promised to be peaceful, that is why I paid another bond. I hope police no give we another one."

The screenshot of some LordBrian and a phone number attached seems to indicate 'noh matta still wah bruk up SSB'. This guy called Faber a sick puppy. Yet, he was trembling after being released by the police. Everyone knows that Yellow is all a show. Coward-Yellow color right? He will fake at doing anything as long as there is a paycheck. He gets a buck from Paul and Peter and his Lord thru the LOO I guess. The most he has broken is some cement at the outside steps at the National Assembly. What do they say about barking puppies? Has he grown to dwag level? Even JV is a full-fledged bull every Monday morning. So the Yellow Goon shouts he will trespass BTL at 10 am and gets stopped by 100-pound Lee. That is what is called 'soft.'

Belizeans, apparently Lee Mark will be trust off the Joint Public Accounts Committee for being too soft for the violent UDP. Lee Mark is lost and confused and Tracy seems to have lost trust in his fire or lack thereof. Lee Mark has asserted that he never loses; In Mesopotamia, he won nothing nor did the people win. What has he done there lately?

Lee Mark has fallen more than twice lately and the UDP who are at rock bottom digging are trying to be a party once more. (the UWG has more members than the UDP) The people do not want Tracy, nor Faber, nor Yellow, Nor Barrow, Nor the lord nor any of the shadows that follow you. The few that you lied to, to support your protest will not do it again.

Belize is for peace. Yes, Belizeans want to have there say...AGREED!! Get vex up!! Bring the argument to the representatives. But not with violence... Leave that violence at the UDP headquarters.



Questions for Cayo West

Dear Editor,
Miguel "Mike" Guerra was elected as UDP Area Representative for Cayo West in March 2025. Nearly a year later, many residents are still asking a simple and reasonable question: What tangible progress has been made for the people of Cayo West?

This is not an accusation, but a call for accountability. As an elected representative, Mr. Guerra receives a monthly salary funded by taxpayers, along with access to the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), which provides \$15,000 monthly to support community projects, small assistance programs, and local development. To date, there appears to be little publicly available information outlining how these resources have been used to benefit villages and residents within the constituency.

Cayo West faces real challenges—road conditions, youth engagement, small business support, access to services, and community infrastructure. Constituents reasonably expect to see visible initiatives, regular reporting, or at least clear communication on what is being done, what is planned, and how funds are allocated.

Transparency is not an attack; it is a duty. Many area representatives across Belize routinely publish updates, host consultations, and account for constituency spending. Doing so builds trust and strengthens democracy.

The people of Cayo West deserve clarity. If projects are underway, share them. If funds have been allocated, let the public know how and where. Silence only fuels speculation, while openness reassures constituents that their interests come first.

Accountability is not partisan—it is fundamental.

Sincerely,
S Hamilton



Belize congratulates Laura Fernández Delgado, President-elect of Costa Rica

4th February 2026

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Government of BELIZE



Ministry of
Human Development,
Family Support, and
Gender Affairs

WHAT WE DO WEDNESDAY

Next Week's Feature:
Economic Empowerment

How does the Ministry support individuals and families to build financial stability and long-term independence?

Next Wednesday, the Ministry of Human Development, Family Support and Gender Affairs continues its What We Do Wednesday series by highlighting Economic Empowerment initiatives designed to support self-reliance, income generation, and financial resilience.

Learn how these programmes help individuals move from assistance to opportunity—strengthening families and communities across Belize.

Facebook & Instagram:
Ministry of Human Development, Family Support and Gender Affairs

Serving People. Strengthening Families. Building Communities.

Belize Advances Public Financial Management Through IPSAS Certification Programme

February 4, 2026 - The Government of Belize continues to strengthen transparency, accountability, and good governance through the successful implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) Certification Programme within the Treasury Department.

IPSAS are globally recognized standards that enhance the quality, consistency, and comparability of public sector financial reporting. Their adoption enables governments to present a more complete and accurate picture of their financial position, including assets, liabilities, and long-term obligations, thereby improving overall public financial management.

The IPSAS-ACCA capacity-building programme was jointly conceptualized by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Treasury Department following Belize's participation in the 2024 Foro de Contadurías Gubernamentales de Latinoamérica (FOCAL) held in El Salvador. Building on discussions at the forum, both institutions collaborated to develop a structured initiative aimed at advancing Belize's public financial management capabilities.

Launched in April 2025, the programme was delivered using a hybrid format, combining in-person and virtual instruction. It consisted of a six-month instructional course followed by the ACCA

IPSAS Certificate examination for officers who successfully completed the coursework. A total of twenty-two (22) Treasury officers, including the Accountant General, participated in the programme. The instructional phase concluded in October 2025, and participants sat the ACCA examination in December 2025, following completion of registration requirements.

At the programme's certification ceremony held on Friday, January 30, 2026, in Belize City, Mr. Stephen Hall, ACCA's representative in Belize and President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Belize (ICAB), described the initiative as a momentous achievement, noting that it is the first programme of its kind in Belize and the wider Caribbean region. He emphasized that the programme represents a significant advancement in technical capacity and professional training within the public sector.

Mrs. Teresita Miranda, Accountant

General, highlighted the long-term impact of the programme, noting that "Implementing IPSAS within Treasury operations and financial statements will improve accuracy, comparability, and decision-making, while strengthening public trust."

Hon. Henry Charles Usher, Minister of the Public Service and Disaster Risk Management, also underscored the broader na-

tional significance of the initiative, stating that "Strong public financial management is essential to national development and good governance. This programme equips our officers with internationally recognized skills that support better planning, oversight, and decision-making across the government." The Ministry of the Public Service and Disaster Risk Management commends the Treasury Department and its officers for their dedication to modernizing financial reporting and strengthening public financial management. (release)



LETTER
TO THE Editor

Questions Around Protest Conduct and Funding

Dear Editor,

Peaceful protest is a protected democratic right, and this government has consistently respected that principle. Belizeans must always be free to demonstrate without fear of repression. However, what unfolded recently raises serious concerns—not about the protest itself, but about the conduct surrounding it.

Observers noted that what began as a union-related demonstration was overtaken by unhinged and dangerous behaviour from individuals displaying bully-style tactics. This conduct created tension and intimidation, effectively hijacking the original purpose of the protest and undermining its legitimacy. Such actions do not reflect the spirit of lawful, peaceful assembly and should concern all Belizeans, regardless of political affiliation.

Alongside concerns about behaviour, questions have also arisen about funding. When protests involve organized transportation, equipment, and coordination, it is reasonable for the public to ask how these activities were financed. These are questions, not accusations.

Were all expenses covered through lawful private means, or were public resources involved, directly or indirectly? Transparency on this matter would protect both the organizers and the integrity of the protest itself.

Belizeans are increasingly aware of how easily legitimate causes can be overshadowed by aggressive tactics and political agendas. Peaceful protest should never be reduced to intimidation, nor should unanswered questions be met with silence.

The people have a right to clarity—about conduct, funding, and intent. Democracy thrives not only on the right to protest, but on responsibility, accountability, and restraint.

Sincerely,
C Reyes

When Purchasing BOLEDO

You help in funding a healthier Belize through the National Health Insurance

BELIZE GOVERNMENT LOTTERIES LTD.

Players must be 18 years or older. Play responsibly.

Joint Sitting of the House of Representatives & Senate
**PRIME MINISTER
JOHN BRICENO**

Continued frompage 7

people's work in facilities that meet the needs of modern Belize. This, madam speaker, is the house where we work an essential part of the democratic process. It is where we debate the bills, motions and resolutions that are essential for the public affairs of our country.

Since 1981, Belize has held 10 general elections. Governments have peacefully exchanged hands six times. Our democratic traditions are deeply engaged in the DNA of every Belizean. We will in this year bring forward the great debate on constitutional reform after the work of the people's constitutional commission. We will consider the important report of the elections and boundaries commission on re-divisioning when it is delivered by the commission. These undertakings are essential to us in maintaining the legitimacy of the democratic of the democracy we cherish. Both Belize and Guyana are irreversibly committed to democratic practices and traditions. Elections which are free and fair. One person, one vote, and the will of the people respected.

Madame Speaker, it would be remiss of me if I did not comment on these brief remarks on the turbulent times we are experiencing. Multi-polarity has reemerged. Multilateralism is on the decline. Tariff wars breed instability and uncertainty. Might is now right. Borders are being transactional. This shift in the international order is inimical to Belize's interest, and I dare say, to the interests of the global south. Belize's existence depends on a world in which multilateralism prevails, where fundamental international norms guide our relations. We can only flourish in a world with strong regional and international institutions that are well-funded for us to meet global threats like climate change. Self-determination, respect for territorial integrity and the peaceful settlements of disputes are articles of fate for Belize and Guyana. We both face territorial claims which will be settled by the international court of justice. We therefore remain that an international order requires an international order that respects court judgments and reject the use of force to settle disputes. We say unequivocally that the Caribbean should be a zone of peace.

Madame Speaker, Belize believes in the non-inference in internal affairs of states. We view with serious concern recent events in our region which clearly undermined this principle. More concerning for us is the recently proclaimed executive order which is likely to have grave consequences for the people of Cuba. The government of Belize stands in full solidarity with the Cuban people. We call for urgent good faith talks to avert a humanitarian crisis which is likely to emerge in the Republic of Cuba if there is ever decreasing deliveries of petroleum products. A manufactured humanitarian disaster is neither moral nor is it legal.

Belize and Guyana, both mainland countries of CARICOM, both facing similar threats to our territories. We are the agricultural powerhouse of the of CARICOM. We are both great stewards of the environment, blessed with similar colonial histories and culturally enriched by our indigenous people. We firmly believe that our future is inextricably linked by our similar histories and challenges we face today. Together we look confidently to the future. We are assured that together we will unlock the possibilities which our peoples deserve. Destiny will favor us, and we will deliver for our people.

Mr. President, on behalf of my government and the Belizean people, I salute you on your recent reelection, and I look forward to working with you in the years ahead as we strengthen our bilateral relations. I know we will continue to build on the excellent relations we enjoy for the benefit of our respective peoples.

May the Almighty continue to bless the people of Belize and Guyana. Thank you so much.

Joint Sitting of the House of Representatives & Senate
DR. MOHAMED IRFAAN ALI

Continued frompage 7

in which we can build a better future for our children. In which our countries can trade and invest with greater confidence.

The movement toward a CARICOM single market and economy offers a shared market that facilitates the movement of labor, capital, goods and services, strengthening competitiveness and widening opportunity for all member states. Despite the challenge it has faced over the decades, the Caribbean community has stood the test of time. I repeat that, the Caribbean community has stood the test of time...

Such diversity sharpens analysis, strengthens decision-making and ensures that outcomes are more inclusive and reflective of our lived realities. Respectful disagreement is not a source of fragmentation, it is often a wellspring of collective strength. The recently concluded partnership agreement between the European Union and Mercosur stands as a clear illustration of the benefits of inter-regional cooperation in a complex and evolving global economy....

For this reason, small states have a strong and enduring interest in active participation in multilateral institutions. Through these frameworks, states, large and small, engage on the basis of agreed principles and mutual respect. Such engagements help to ensure that differences are managed through dialogue, cooperation, and established processes.

Multilateral engagement is therefore not a matter of convenience for small states, it is necessity. It provides the rules, norms, and collective engagements that ensure smaller nations are heard and our issues are addressed. In a system grounded in cooperation and respect for law, legitimacy carries weight, and power is tempered by principle.

By supporting and strengthening multilateral engagement, small states help to safeguard their sovereignty, enhance their security, and preserve their right to shape their own destinies. In a global economy marked by change and uncertainty, small states cannot afford to rely excessively on a narrow range of markets or partnerships. Dependence is not a strategy, it is a vulnerability....

A diversified economy embracing new frontiers, such as digitization, technology-driven services, and environmental services is not merely desirable. It is a practical investment in long-term resilience and sustainable development. Our future and future-proofing our economies require us to embrace AI, digitization, technology, and the ecosystem that ensures this generation and the next generation can function in the new world.

We must also ensure that the legislative framework and the rules that govern the equitable delivery of these technologies and the moral compass through which these technologies are implemented are in place today to secure our society, our democracy, and our ideals. This is now a practical investment in long-term resilience and sustainable development. On the bright side, the size of our population is the pilot size for any technology.

So we can do this at scale and at speed through a pilot. And yes, it is expensive. But if we look at what we have already and the capacity we have already in the system, it will allow us to do this at a cost that is more reflective of our economies....

From transnational criminal networks engaged in the trafficking of weapons, people, and illicit goods. Geography places both Belize and Guyana along routes that are exploited by such networks, creating challenges that no single state can address alone. These threats do not respect borders.

They therefore require coordinated responses. Transnational problems demand transnational solutions. It is imperative that small states actively pursue cooperation within regional and international – with regional and international partners who share a common interest in preventing, disrupting, and dismantling organized criminal activity....

And this is not the responsibility for governments alone. It is the responsibility of every citizen, every organization, and the private sector. In the development of a modern society, every segment of the society must be held accountable. Accountability is not only for the government. It is for the opposition. It is for the private sector. It is for the education system. It is for every segment of the population. Economic openness also plays a critical role in development. ...

Climate change represents the most serious and immediate existential challenge facing small states, including Belize and Guyana. Rising sea levels, increasingly intense storms, prolonged droughts, and coastal erosion threaten lives, livelihoods, and long-term development. For centuries, with low-lying coastlines and climate-sensitive economies, these impacts are accelerating and demand sustained attention at national, regional, and global levels. Small states are neither passive nor powerless in the face of this challenge...

Belize and Guyana have consistently demonstrated leadership in this regard. We provide the world with critical ecosystem and environmental services, including carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and climate regulation. And let me say something on biodiversity. We launched the Global Biodiversity Alliance. We live in a planet today where in the last 60 years we have lost more than 60 percent of our biodiversity assets globally. Belize and Guyana, we have kept most of ours intact. When biodiversity goes, ecological systems go, medicine goes, pharmaceutical goes, research and development goes, culture goes, indigenous knowledge goes, because biodiversity supports all of those things. Forest-rich and biodiversity-endowed countries must therefore place appropriate value on these assets and manage them responsibly. In Guyana, we have made it clear that our forests are worth more standing than being felled....

For Belize, Guyana, and the wider Caribbean, food security must mean ensuring that all our peoples have reliable access to affordable, nutritious, and adequate food. Recognizing this imperative, CARICOM has set an ambitious yet achievable target of reducing the region's food import bill by 25% by 2030. And here lie enormous opportunities for Belize and Guyana....

Strengthening our agri-food system is not only an economic necessity, it is a strategic imperative for resilience, public health, and social stability. Food security alone, however, cannot sustain development or resilience unless it is supported by reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy. Energy powers production, transportation, and value creation across our economies.

Energy security is, therefore, vital to the economic transformation and long-term competitiveness of small states. High and volatile energy prices raise production costs, strain public finance, and undermine growth, particularly in economies that depend heavily on energy imports. For many years, our region has been exposed to external energy shocks, leaving our economies vulnerable to global price fluctuations...

Let us not forget that by reducing dependence on imported fossil fuels and stabilizing energy costs, we can accelerate economic progress, enhance resilience, and create a more secure and sustainable future for our peoples.

I conclude by reminding Honorable Members that throughout history, our peoples and our lands have braved storms, both literal and in metaphor. We have endured the forces of nature. We have resisted enslavement and injustices of indentureship and colonial domination. We have preserved through economic hardship our culture, our systems, and our people. Time and again, Belizeans and Guyanese have demonstrated a steadfast belief in our right to determine our own future. Our history is not one of passivity. It is a history of persistence. That legacy now calls upon us to act with renewed purpose....

Belize and Guyana may be small in size, but we are not small in principle, ambition, or determination. By standing together within our region and beyond, by upholding the rule of law, strengthening democratic institutions, and cooperating strategically, we can ensure that our peoples do more than endure the challenges of our time. We can ensure that they prosper....

I can assure you, you have two governments aligned in this vision of empowering the private sector, empowering the people to grow their prosperity, advance their businesses, create jobs, and enhance the economic well-being of the people of both countries. The private sector is central to the expansion of this relationship. The private sector is integral to the expansion of this relationship.

Together, we can transform challenges into opportunities and offer our peoples not only security and stability, but confidence in the future they are building. I thank you, Honorable Members, for the privilege of addressing this Assembly. May God bless this Honorable Assembly.

May God continue to bless Belize and Guyana and the enduring bond of friendship between our countries. I thank you and God bless all of you. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpWC1J-mP6A>) 2:07



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOREIGN TRADE, EDUCATION, CULTURE, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

CONSTRUCTION OF VERANDA ROOF AND VEHICLE & COASTER SHEDS FOR THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN BELMOPAN

The Government of Belize (GOB), through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, Education, Culture, Science & Technology intends to construct a Veranda Roof and Vehicle & Coaster Sheds at its main offices located on North Ring Road in Belmopan.

Provided there are no delays, construction is expected to start within a month. The MIDH hereby invites interested contractors in the civil works to be part of this bidding process.

An Engineer from the Project Execution Unit - Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project activities.

The Scope of Works will include:

- Construction of Metal Roof on Existing Terrace (1740 SF)
- Construction of Vehicle Shed (7248 SF)
- Construction of Coaster Shed (528 SF)

Consideration will be given to local firms who have qualified experience in building construction of similar nature.

Minimum Qualification Criteria:

- General Construction Experience: 5 Years
- Specific Construction Experience in Similar Works (Building Construction)
- Contract Management Experience: 5 Years
- Access to Line of Credit: \$200,000.00
- Average annual turnover of minimum: Bz\$250,000.00
- Qualified registered Engineer: 5 years' experience

Effective **Monday 2 February 2026**, Bidding Documents are available at a cost of **Bz\$500.00** from the address below.

Bidders shall submit proposals (one original and one hard copy) in a sealed envelope to the address below. The sealed envelope containing each submission must include the name and address of the applicant.

A Site Visit will be conducted on **Thursday 5 February 2026 at 10:00am**. Bidders shall congregate at the Ministry's main office on North Ring Road in Belmopan.

All Bidding Documents properly completed should reach the office of the Chief Executive Officer at the address below no later than **Friday 20 February 2026 at 10:00 am**. The Ministry shall not accept responsibility for any costs incurred by the applicants.

Attention: **Mr. Evondale Moody**
Chief Engineer / Engineering Coordinator
Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing
Power Lane
Belmopan
BELIZE C.A.

Tel: +501-828-5221
Email: peu@midh.gov.bz



Government of
BELIZE

Belize Press Office

822.0094 or 822.0092

822.2671

www.pressoffice.gov.bz



Cabinet Brief

Belmopan, February 5, 2026

The Cabinet met on 3rd February 2026.

- After reviewing the rapid assessment of challenges in San Pedro, Ambergris Caye, and Caye Caulker related to guest experiences in these destinations, Cabinet supported the development of a detailed plan to address key concerns and committed to allocating resources for priority improvements to safeguard the sustainability of tourism on both islands.
- Cabinet was apprised of the work undertaken by Belize's International Cooperation Council and the outcomes of its International Cooperation Council Partners' Conference, where Belize aims to advance its green transition by converting plans into investment-ready outcomes supported by strong coordination, institutional capacity, and sustained leadership.
- Cabinet took note of the steps being taken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade in the advancement of a National Human Rights Institution, which will shortly announce the start of a project titled "Advancing Human Rights in Belize: Establishing a National Human Rights Institution."
- Cabinet will introduce several new bills at Friday's Sitting of the House of Representatives to empower traffic wardens to better enforce traffic rules and to improve public safety on roads and highways.
- Finally, Cabinet encourages all Belizeans to get vaccinated against the flu to help protect themselves and others.

Ends

BELIZEPROPERTYAUCTIONS.COM

PUBLIC AUCTION SALES: VEHICLES

Belize City, Belize District

BY ORDER of the Mortgagees Messrs. The Belize Bank Limited, Licensed Auctioneers Kevin A. Castillo and Christiana R. Castillo are selling ONLINE via belizepropertyauctions.com the following vehicles. Sales currently running and will expire fortnightly on the dates and times listed on the website until these vehicles are sold.

VEHICLES



2024 Ford Ranger XLT



2020 Kia Sportage



2017 Chevy Cruze

"FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & PHOTOGRAPHS PLEASE VISIT WEBSITE"

TERMS: STRICTLY CASH

KEVIN A. CASTILLO

TELEPHONE 223-4488

Website: belizepropertyauctions.com

E-mail: kevinacas@yahoo.com

Facebook: Belize Auction

Congratulations!

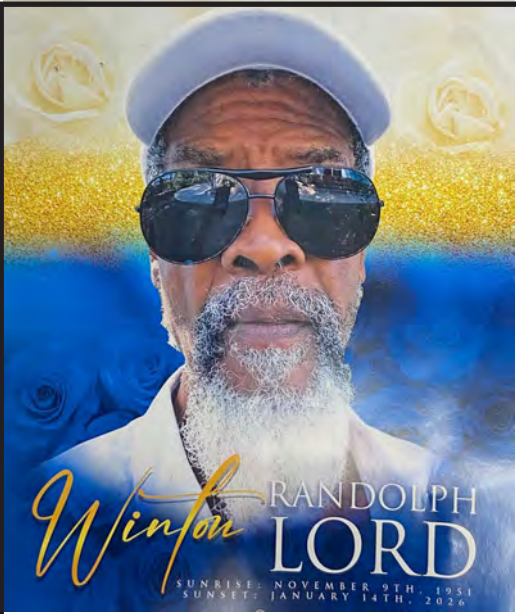


25 YEARS OF NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE

Have you Registered?

COMING UP: MID-FEBRUARY IN CAYO & BELMOPAN





EULOGY

Winton Randolph Lord

“Music is life itself”

Delivered by Chairman Hon. Henry Charles Usher

I can't remember at what age my brother PJ and I first met Tall B, but we were very young. And I don't know how it is that my mother, who was very strict with us growing up, allowed her two young sons to hang out with this "weed smoking, jive talking, feech driving, dice throwing, jazz listening, Louis Lamour Westerns reading, incredible human being, but I am so grateful to her for doing so. Tall B was a great man whose life reminds us that "greatness" does not have to be loud. While some people leave their mark with grand

toughening up, but she also recognized that Tall B had a special way with us. He cared for us. He protected us. He guided us and believed in us – sometimes before we believed in ourselves. He taught us about principles, about values, the importance of honesty, responsibility and hard work.

We went to Majestic and Palace Theatres with him. We went to Bismark Club to play table tennis, of course I may have learned dominoes, cards and a little dice too. But these are life skills, right? We rode our bikes to the 5 miles, took the bus when the weather was bad, hitchhiked when we took too long to catch the last bus. Summer holidays were spent fishing, paddling dory to the Pint or to a small mangrove island we called Guana Island, because the first time we went there a huge iguana jumped into the dory. Needless to say, PJ and I abandoned ship. But not Tall B. He just laughed and told us the iguana was probably more afraid of us.

We swam in the river, ate coconuts, caught soldier crab and johnny fiddler more for the fun of it than as actual bait, hooked blue crab to sell at Yabra but not the wash spaam – Tall B said those were poisonous. We played basketball, shot bee bee guns and generally held back Tall B from doing the work he was supposed to be doing.

And the one truism that he reinforced in us was "If you practice fool you will be a fool". Oh mein, PJ and I took that to heart. We did not want to be fools in front of Tall B, so we made sure we didn't practice it.

But it wasn't just the two of us who benefitted from Tall B's presence. All the grandkids and our friends grew up with Tall B and we all remained close because of it. Tall B taught us loyalty and the value of family. Tall B sat with us as we did our homework, helped out with school projects, did repairs in our homes, took us to football games. He even wore Sagitun and Altitude t-shirts much to the chagrin of Kulture Yabra and Port Layola FC. He was always seen with his Topsy Tuna hat and made sure that we had to visit Salva if we were anywhere close to Placencia. He went to BDF events to support Bobby D and Francis. He attended all baptisms to make sure he met the new generation. He was always just a phone call away.

Even in his late years, Tall B had a gentle way with children. Just ask his next door neighbour Tanya, whose young daughter was always looking out for Tall B. Whenever I went to visit Tall B on Saturdays she was say "Mr. Tall B somebody come look for you".

There is no doubt that we are who we are today, because we had a role model like Tall B. He stood faithfully by our sides from the time we were boys to when we became men, ready to face the world armed with the values he instilled, grit, humility and selflessness. So Mom, the slight exposure to herbal medication was worth it.

Tall B was right there by my side when I got married to Jamie. He promised me that he was going to celebrate to the fullest and that he did. He was right there by my side when I became Chairman of the Party, travelling with me countrywide to meetings, conventions and elections. He especially enjoyed the village council elections, because those could get passionate. There was an especially memorable one in Hattieville where Tall B was on the front line staring down the opposition.

On these road trips as Reebo drove and I took a little nap Tall B was checking the GPS on his phone. He was never without that GPS, always wanting to track his trip. But also checking out the terrain. I guess he was reminiscing about his oil surveying days.

Tall B was a proud member of the People's United Party. He believed in the principles of the Party to serve the people, to promote social justice. He put others first and believed in the task of Nation Building. He called George Price Tio George and proudly wore a shirt with his image to every Party event. He was a member of the PUP Fort George Committee and nominated me as a candidate in both elections. He celebrated every victory with me, always reminding me that my job was to do the best for the people every day. It is my duty to live up to his expectation and example.

He died on January 14th, 16 days ago. Some people may say that was a long time in between. But I think it fits Tall B well. After all, in life he took his time. And he would have wanted Brian and all his family here. And to his family. Thank you for lending out this great man. As children he would take us to your homes and you welcomed us.

Shaheda and Junior, your Dad loved you immensely. You were his world, and there wasn't anything he wouldn't do for you. And don't even ask about Briana and Briel. He adored them. He was so proud of you, Shaheda and the job you were doing as a mother.

I mentioned earlier that Tall B loved jazz. He would put on those head phones and be lost in a world of Dave Brubeck, Miles Davis, Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday and so many more. One of his favorites was Duke Ellington, who famously said "**Music is life itself**" meaning music transcends even death. Like a good jazz ensemble Tall B's life was lived in between the notes, a little change of course from time to time, a loud bang followed a long period of smooth then it all repeated itself again at his own speed but in the end the perfect mix. I hope the jazz is on fulltime loop Tallest and you singing those tunes and dancing to the beats all the while twirling that beard.

And so...

We must honour Tall B by making his legacy transcend death. By not only remembering who he was but by carrying forward what he stood for. By choosing humility over pride, kindness over indifference, faith over fear, service over selfishness.

If we do that – even a little – then Tall B's life continues to matter, not just in memory, but in action. And that is the mark of a truly great life.

Thank you...

speeches or public recognition, Tall B left his mark through every day deeds and actions – through consistency, through character, through loyalty and through love.

Dorla, Carol, Shaheda and the entire family it is truly and honour for me to speak today about Winton Lord, known as 'Slim' in his younger days, 'Tall B' to most of us, 'Tall C' if you at Bizmark, 'Tallest', 'Tallers' or to some of the younger guys just coming out as 'Ancient One'. I don't think that name was because of his age, but rather because he was a walking encyclopedia of knowledge on just about any subject.

Tall B was a humble man. Not because he lacked strength or wisdom, but because he never felt the need to prove it. He didn't seek attention or praise. He listened more than he spoke, but when he spoke you had better listen because it mattered.

I wonder if back on November 9, 1951 when Ms. Beatrice named him Winton, she knew how appropriate a name it really was. In old English the name Winton means "friendly place". And that is exactly who Tall B was, a friend, to everyone. His kindness showed up in patience, in forgiveness, and in the way he treated everyone with dignity. No matter who you were or where you came from, you mattered to him. He believed that all people deserved respect.

As a young boy Tall B gave his share of trouble, of course, as we have heard. But he knew that Ms. Beatrice belt was waiting if she found out. And it is his mother that he credits for teaching him discipline and resilience. He always told me how much he loved his mother and admired the way she cared for the family. It was she who taught him the value of continuous education through a love of reading.

And did Tall B love to read. He always had a book with him. But his favourites were the Louis L'Amour westerns. I don't know where he got them, but he seemed to have an endless supply. "To the Far Blue Mountains" "The Warrior's Path" "Fair Blows the Wind" These are just some of the titles I can remember. Tall B would read the Belize Times and argue politics at the Biz. No one could top him because he knew all the facts.

Winton came of age in the exciting decades of the 60s and 70s, the age of revolution. Civil rights, music, fashion, it was a wild ride of change. And Tall B was right there enjoying it all, the bell bottom jeans, the afro hair and of course jazz music. He had his own style and moved at his own speed. Everyone is familiar with Tall B's speed. No matter how much he was urged. No matter how urgent the task Tall B just shrugged and said "Really!" But you know what, the job always got done.

Some of his friends at the time included Paul Stock, Alaister King, Bob Joslin, Anthony Chanona, and my Uncle Mike Usher. And they shared some colourful adventures to say the least. I'll have to save those stories for another time. But it was he and Mike Usher who were really inseparable, working the oil business. He once told me that he and Mike ran a survey line from Corozal to Toledo, hiking through jungle, braving the wildlife and elements and enjoying themselves all the way. If they had to run the line through private property Mike would go talk to the landowners first, but it was usually Tall B that had to seal the deal. He just had a way with people. I smile to think about the reunion he and Tio Mike are now having.

Tall B worked on a Texan oil rig and, of course, he had to put up with a lot of unsavory comments. But that didn't faze him. As a matter of fact, he worked his way up from a regular worker to a motor man, earning the respect of the roughnecks. Slim, as he was called, was part of the crew, and they looked out for each other, especially when the corporate big wigs would come around complaining.

Tio Mike and Tall B were pioneers of the oil industry in Belize. Mike believed that our country was blessed with oil and Tall B was right there to support him, always telling anyone who was willing to listen that there was more oil in Belize, we just needed to know where to look. Tall B knew the directors of BNE personally. He got along with them easily and treated them the same like everyone else. It's a testament to who he was to have been able to touch so many lives.

Tall B started to work at the Usher Residence sometime in the 1980s after Mike asked him to. What probably started off as a temporary arrangement turned into years of dedicated service. My grandfather, Henry Charles, had a soft spot for Tall B, bailing him out of trouble on a few occasions. Gramps even gave him boledo advice that Tall B remembered always, that "if yu bruk, buy yu age." But it was Miss Jane, Granny Jane, who really formed an unlikely bond with Tall B. Oh there were many, many, many scoldings but Gran had Tall B's back. And Tall B loved her like his own mother. I don't know how many times my Uncle Clement would shake his head, when Tall B came to ask for money to do something for Gran, because he knew Gran would say yes. And when Tio Mike died Tall B played an even more important part in Gran's life.

It was in the 80s that my life's arc intersected with Tall B's, as PJ and I were thrust into Tall B's world by a very brave mother. But Ms Leni knew that Tall B would not let anything happen to us. She probably realized that we needed a little

HISTORIC

Visit by President of Guyana Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali
Newly Refurbished National Assembly

ARRIVAL



At National Assembly Joint Sitting



Welcome by
Prime Minister Briceño

Signing Memorandums
of Understanding



Joint Statement of Intent to
Negotiate a Bilateral Investment
Treaty

State Reception



Guest at the House Sitting



President Ali's
Principal Address

Meets with Cabinet



Courtesy Call on
Governor General



Visit to Santander, Site of Caribbean
Sugar Refinery & Spanish Lookout



Collaboration in
Digital Transformation
& Artificial Intelligence

Increased Cooperation
in Tourism Promotion
and Investment



Scholarships, Research
Cooperation, Academic &
Professional Exchanges



Addressing Emerging
Threats & Strengthening
Armed Forces

VAMOS BIEN



Reaction After BTL Presentation on Merger

Dear Editor,

After listening to a thorough and detailed presentation from BTL on the acquisition of Speednet, I now have a clearer understanding of both the strategic rationale behind the transaction and the legitimate concerns it raises. Much of the public discussion thus far has been distorted by sensationalism, partial information, and political mischief, allowing market noise to overwhelm substance. In such an environment, facts struggle to compete with rhetoric, and policy questions are reduced to talking points.

From a consumer’s perspective, the strongest argument in favor of the acquisition is stability combined with long-term investment capacity. Telecommunications today is no longer about phone calls alone. It is the infrastructure through which children access education, businesses operate, families maintain social ties, and communities coordinate during emergencies. The quality of this infrastructure shapes daily life in ways that are often invisible until it fails.

A consolidated BTL improves Belize’s ability to plan strategically rather than reactively. It allows for coordinated network upgrades, reduced infrastructure duplication, and more rational capital allocation. If consolidation results in stronger national coverage, fewer dropped calls, and more reliable data, particularly outside Belize City, consumers benefit in tangible, everyday ways. These are not abstract gains; they are measurable improvements in lived experience.

There is also a broader economic and sovereignty dimension that consumers cannot ignore. Consolidation reduces capital leakage abroad and increases the likelihood that revenues generated by Belizean users are reinvested locally rather than extracted offshore. Communication networks are not neutral utilities. They structure economic participation, emergency response, security coordination, and democratic exchange. Control over these systems is therefore not merely commercial; it is strategic.

This becomes especially relevant when viewed against emerging global pressures. Belize is no longer operating in a closed, or even regional, telecommunications environment. Global actors are already present. Starlink, for example, reportedly has over 600 subscribers in Belize, yet it maintains no physical infrastructure, no local workforce, no tax base, and no long-term development obligations in the country. Its services are governed entirely outside Belizean jurisdiction. While the technology offers clear advantages, particularly for remote connectivity, it also represents a model of digital extraction in which profits exit instantly and accountability does not enter at all.

In this context, a fragmented domestic telecom sector would be structurally weaker. A consolidated BTL is better positioned to invest at scale, negotiate technology partnerships, upgrade national backbones, and defend regulatory space in an increasingly asymmetrical global market. Competition with global satellite providers cannot be met with slogans or ideological purity; it requires capital depth, institutional coherence, and strategic clarity.

That said, it would be intellectually dishonest to ignore the risks. Reduced competition can weaken price discipline, slow innovation, and erode consumer leverage if regulation is not firm and transparent. Belizeans remember why competition mattered: it forced better pricing, improved data packages, and faster responses to consumer complaints. Consolidation therefore places a heavier burden on BTL, not symbolically as a national entity, but practically as a service provider. National ownership alone does not guarantee national benefit.

Support for consolidation must therefore be conditional. Consumers need clear guarantees: transparent pricing structures, measurable service standards, and strong regulatory oversight with real enforcement mechanisms. If consumers lose the ability to switch providers easily, they must gain the ability to demand performance credibly. Accountability cannot be rhetorical; it must be institutional.

Unfortunately, the UDP has chosen to treat this issue as a political football, prioritizing short-term political mileage over long-term national positioning. Telecom policy does not lend itself to manufactured outrage. Turning it into a partisan battleground distracts from the only question that ultimately matters to consumers: Will my service improve, and will my bill remain fair? That question deserves answers grounded in performance, not politics.

The conversation Belize needs is not one drowned out by kitchen noise. It is one that weighs sovereignty against competition, national capacity against consumer protection, and present discomfort against future vulnerability. If we fail to have that conversation honestly, we risk waking up one day fully connected, but no longer in control.

As a consumer, I can support the acquisition of Speednet by BTL, but only if consolidation delivers better service, fair pricing, and genuine accountability. National ownership must never become an excuse for complacency. In a future shaped by global platforms and satellite networks, Belize needs a telecommunications provider strong enough to face external forces and disciplined enough to serve its people internally. Anything less would leave consumers connected, but unprotected.

More Belizeans should inform themselves...

Thanks for Allowing
Rick Moguel

3 STEPS TO PREVENT
OBESITY



LIMIT FATS & SUGARS



EAT MORE
FRUITS & VEGGIES



DO REGULAR
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



PAHO

60 mins/day for children
150 mins through the week for adults

Tips for pharmacy staff:

What to do if you think
you have a substandard or
falsified medical product

Suspend the dispensing of the suspicious
medical products while you report the
incident to the National Medicine
Regulatory Authority.



The National Institute of Culture and History, proudly supported by
MADISCO and the Belize City Council, cordially invites you to attend

WINE & CHEESE

Under the Stars

12th February 2026 from 5:30 PM to 10:00 PM
House of Culture, Dr Dame Minita Gordon Drive, Belize City

Live Performance by the Super Furia Band, Cindy the Violinist and Leon Banks
Music by Fyah Statah Sounds

Come and enjoy the cultural presentations, poetry, dance and handicrafts on display!



REQUEST FOR BID
(GOODS)



SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF
MARINE MONITOR RADAR

Institution: Ministry of Finance
Country: Belize
Project: Belize Blue Cities and Beyond Project
Process ID: BZ-CEU-460478-GO-RFB
Deadline: February 16, 2026; 10:00 a.m. (Local Belize Time)

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received loan financing from the World Bank for the Belize Blue Cities and Beyond Project, being implemented by the Ministry of Finance.

The Ministry of Finance, through its Central Executing Unit, intends to allocate a portion of the project’s proceeds for the supply, installation and support of three (3) **Marine Monitor Radar** (hereinafter called “Goods”), to be used for coastal surveillance and enforcement at three of Belize’s Marine Reserves.

No.	Goods	Quantity
Lot 1	Marine Monitoring Radar Systems	Available in the bidding document

The Ministry of Finance invites bidders to access the complete bidding document at <https://mof.gov.bz/procurement-opportunities/> or by scanning the QR code below, and to submit bids in accordance with the instructions provided in the bidding document.

ATTN:
Procurement Specialist
Ministry of Finance
2nd Floor, Sir Edney Cain Building, Belmopan
Tel: 501-822-4106
procurement@ceu.mof.gov.bz



REQUEST FOR BID
(GOODS)



SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT

Institution: Ministry of Finance
Country: Belize
Project: Belize Reliant and Resilient Energy System Project
Process ID: BZ-MFEDI-CEU-483430-GO-RFB
Deadline: February 27, 2026; 9:00 a.m. (Local Belize Time)

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received loan financing from the World Bank (WB) for the execution of the Project: “Belize Reliant and Resilient Energy System Project”.

The Ministry of Finance, through its Central Executing Unit, intends to allocate a portion of the project’s proceeds for the purchase of Office Furniture & Equipment (hereinafter called “Goods”).

No.	Item	Specifications & Quantity
Lot 1	Computer Equipment	Available in the bidding documents
Lot 2	Camera Drones	Available in the bidding documents
Lot 3	Office Furniture	Available in the bidding documents

Bidders may submit a proposal for ONE LOT or for ALL THREE Lots. Each bid submitted must include every item within the selected lot to be considered responsive.

The Ministry of Finance invites bidders to access the complete bidding document at <https://mof.gov.bz/procurement-opportunities/> or by scanning the QR code below, and to submit bids in accordance with the instructions provided in the bidding documents.

ATTN:
Procurement Specialist
Ministry of Finance
2nd Floor, Sir Edney Cain Building, Belmopan
Tel: 501-822-4106
procurement@ceu.mof.gov.bz



NOTICE
Request for
Prequalification (RFPQ)

Utility-Scale Solar PV Projects
in Belize (80 MW)

Belize Electricity Limited (BEL), in partnership with the Government of Belize (GoB) through the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy and Logistics (MPUEL), and with advisory support from the International Finance Corporation (IFC), invites qualified private-sector developers to participate in a Request for Prequalification (RFPQ) for landmark utility-scale solar PV projects in Belize.

To deliver this initiative, the GoB has engaged the IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, acting through its Advisory Services division, as lead transaction advisor. The Project is being structured under the globally recognized Scaling Solar initiative, which promotes an open, competitive, and transparent procurement process to accelerate the deployment of privately owned utility-scale solar projects.

Procurement Process

The RFPQ represents the first stage of a competitive bidding process. Its purpose is to prequalify developers with the technical experience, financial capacity, and delivery capability required to implement large-scale solar PV projects within an accelerated timeframe. Only prequalified bidders will be invited to participate in the subsequent Request for Proposals (RFP) stage.



International
Finance Corporation
WORLD BANK GROUP

Project Overview

Total Capacity:
Up to 80 MW of
grid-connected
utility-scale solar PV

Sites:
3 to 4 locations across Belize

Commercial Structure:
Independent Power Producer
(IPP) model

Role of the Private Sector:
Design, finance, construct,
own, operate, and maintain the
solar PV facilities

Objectives of the Project

This strategic investment is a cornerstone of Belize’s energy transition and is intended to:



Increase renewable
energy generation to
support Belize’s target
of 75% renewable
electricity by 2030



Reduce foreign
exchange outflows
associated with
electricity imports



Strengthen national
energy security and
system reliability

Access to RFPQ

The full RFQ document, including eligibility criteria, submission requirements, and timelines, is available at:

www.bel.com.bz/Tenders

Belize is open for clean energy investment. Qualified developers are encouraged to participate in this transformative project that will shape the country’s sustainable energy future.

MRT - UNICEF Donate Water System Equipment to Fourteen Communities

The Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development and Local Government, in a continued mission to bridge the infrastructure gap in southern Belize, officially handed over a large consignment of water system expansion materials on January 31, 2026. This significant event, held at the Machaca Forest Station, marks a milestone in the national effort to enhance potable water access for fourteen communities across the Toledo District. This essential donation, facilitated through the collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Rural Transformation and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), provides the critical hardware necessary to extend rural water networks to ensure sustainable service delivery to rural households.



The inventory of materials includes high-grade piping, water meters to improve residential tracking and conservation, and a heavy-duty generator designed to ensure system resilience during power fluctuations for San Jose Village. This strategic investment is designed to address the unique geographical challenges of the south by equipping local water boards with the tools needed for both technical reliability and administrative efficiency. These resources will benefit the communities of Yemeri Grove, San Vicente, Blue Creek, Big Falls, Graham Creek, Bella Vista, San Pedro Columbia, San Antonio, Jordan, Santa Teresa, San Felipe, San Pablo, San Isidro, and San Jose.

The handover ceremony was attended by Hon. Oscar Requena, Minister of Rural Transformation, Community Development, and Local Government; Dr. Hon. Osmond Martinez, Area Representative for Toledo East; and Dr. Olusola Oladeji, the Health and Nutrition Specialist for UNICEF. They were joined by Mr. Valentino Shal, Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development and Local Government, along with chairpersons and members of the respective community water boards. The presence of these officials underscores the high-level commitment to rural development and the shared priority of ensuring that every Belizean household has access to safe and reliable water.

The speakers noted that this handover is not merely a delivery of hardware, but a vital step in the government’s broader mandate to ensure that geography never determines the quality of life for Belizeans. By helping to improve the technical capabilities of these fourteen villages, the Ministry and its partners are effectively closing the service gap between rural and urban areas. This initiative stands as a definitive benchmark for future development, proving that through shared responsibility and strategic investment, the communities of the Toledo District are being equipped to safeguard their own resources and drive their own growth well into the future. (release)



The inventory of materials includes high-grade piping, water meters to improve residential tracking and conservation, and a heavy-duty generator designed to ensure system resilience during power fluctuations



VACANCY NOTICE

LEGISLATURE – NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

POSITION: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) TECHNICIAN I

Application are invited from suitable qualified persons to fill one (1) position of **IT Technician I** for the Legislature at the National Assembly. The National Assembly is the Legislature or Parliament of Belize. It consists of two Houses, that is, the Senate (Upper House) and the House of Representatives (Lower House). The thirty-one (31) Members of the House of Representatives are elected in a general election under the provisions of the Representation of the People Act. Meanwhile, the thirteen (13) Members of the Senate are nominated and appointed by the Governor General of Belize, in accordance with the Constitution of Belize.

The National Assembly Staff (Conditions of Service) Regulations, 2003, define how staff of the National Assembly are governed.

Basic Purpose of Position:

To provide general maintenance of computers and computer equipment and for the resolving of identified technical problems. The technician is expected to undertake general tasks which will promote seamless use of IT infrastructure in a work environment.

1. Essential Duties and Responsibilities

1. Serving as the first point of contact for IT support within the Office of the Clerk
2. Support staff whenever they encounter challenges with computer devices
3. Assist in installing, configuring, and maintaining software and hardware components of the computer system/CITO network system
4. Maintaining and updating technical documentation regularly
5. Overseeing and assisting in the audio/video recordings of the House/Senate meetings
6. Making software available to appropriate users.
7. Installing, testing and troubleshooting software.
8. Ensuring the anti-virus software is installed, properly configured, regularly updated and working properly on all PC and server stations.
9. Distributing files as required for staff use.
10. Assist in maintaining servers and network hardware.
11. Receiving and setting up hardware.
12. Diagnosing/troubleshooting software/hardware and/or peripheral devices failures.
13. Serves as liaison to software/hardware providers and outside repair services for the purpose of conveying and/or receiving information.
14. Liaising with the designated personnel responsible for keeping the inventory.
15. Maintaining computer peripheral equipment e.g. printers, scanners and projectors.
16. Maintaining wired and wireless networks, desktop and server computers.
17. Providing technical support for hardware and software issues in the office.
18. Assist in Setting up and maintaining backup system for file servers and in-office desktop computers.
19. Prepares a variety of written materials (e.g. procedures, etc.) for the purpose of providing written support and/or conveying information.
20. Responsible for the inventory of original software and drivers.
21. Recommend the procurement of computer parts, supplies and materials for the purpose of ensuring the availability of items commonly required to repair computer hardware.
22. Trains personnel on the operation of new hardware and/or applications for the purpose of developing and/or updating computer skills.
23. Responsible for the Transportation of a variety of items (e.g. equipment, supplies, etc.) for the purpose of providing materials at job site or bringing equipment in for repairs.
24. Warehouses computer parts, supplies and materials for the purpose of establishing an inventory of items commonly required to repair computer hardware.
25. Responsible for helpdesk and remote assistance.

2. The Candidate should possess the following qualifications and skills:

Experience/Skills, Knowledge and Abilities:

Technical:

1. Hands on experience Troubleshooting hardware/software
2. Knowledge of technical environment and network topologies.
3. Knowledgeable of windows operating systems and servers.
4. Experience in installing network cable and patching.
5. Knowledge of security protocols
6. Analytical skills
7. Disaster recovery methods
8. Supervisory skills
9. Keep self abreast of new and changing technologies in related field

Behavioral:

1. Provide clear useful communication when supporting technology
2. Exhibit strong customer service orientation
3. Fast learner
4. Have patience
5. Strong communication skills
6. Interpersonal skills
7. Research skills
8. Ethical skills

Proven work experience in IT support or IT technician roles, in-depth knowledge of Windows and other GOB operating systems, practical experience with internet and network security protocols

3. Academic Qualification:

Minimum an Associates Degree in Information Technology, Computer Science or related field with 2-3 years working experience in the field.

4. Reporting Responsibility:

The IT Technician I first reporting officer is the Deputy Clerk and the Second reporting officer is The Clerk of the National Assembly

5. Salary:

Equivalent to Government’s Payscale 14 of \$28,637 x 1188 – 51,209 per annum.

Deadline for applications

Interested persons who are in possession of the required qualification and experience and have the aptitude for the post of this nature are requested to submit a complete application package which must include a cover letter, curriculum vitae, copies of relevant qualifications, a copy of a recent Police record to **The Clerk, National Assembly, Independence Hill, Belmopan**, no later than **11th February, 2026.**

World Wetlands Day Celebrated Historic MOU Signing in Crooked Tree Village



livihoods they support. The Minister further noted that the MOU institutionalized community participation, strengthened governance arrangements, and aligned national conservation priorities with local realities.

The MOU established a clear framework to regulate traditional fishing and resource use within the Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary, while maintaining compliance with national environmental legislation. It outlined roles and responsibilities among the parties, recognized traditional fisherfolk, and set conditions to ensure sustainable use, monitoring, and enforcement. The agreement also laid the groundwork for updating the Sanctuary's Management Plan and advancing its proposed reclassification to Wildlife Sanctuary II, reflecting a more inclusive and participatory conservation model for Crooked Tree Village and its buffer communities.

Community representation featured prominently throughout the ceremony, reinforcing the principle that Crooked Tree Village and its buffer communities were central to the long-term management of the Sanctuary. The signing of the MOU marked a significant milestone in collaborative environmental governance, demonstrating a balanced approach that safeguards biodiversity while honouring cultural heritage and sustaining traditional livelihoods.

The observance concluded with expressions of appreciation to all partners and stakeholders, and with a reaffirmation of Belize's commitment to protecting its wetlands through cooperation, traditional knowledge, and shared responsibility.

A welcome address was delivered by Mrs. Elizabeth Wallace Escobar, Chairlady of the Crooked Tree Village Council. A key highlight of the agenda was a presentation titled *"From Dialogue to Agreement – Our MOU Journey"* by Mr. Shane Young of the Belize Audubon Society, which outlined the collaborative process that led to the agreement. An overview of the MOU was then provided by Mr. Saul Cruz of the National Biodiversity Office.

The keynote address was delivered by Hon. Orlando Habet, Minister of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Solid Waste Management, during which he emphasized that the agreement demonstrated how culture, tradition, and conservation could coexist within protected areas. He highlighted that traditional knowledge and practices were not relics of the past, but vital tools for ensuring the long-term resilience of wetlands and the



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES – INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT SELECTION)

Belize

Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture Project (CRESAP)

Loan No.: 9347 BE

Project ID No.: P172592

Assignment Title: Procurement Officer

Reference No. (as per Procurement Plan): BZ-SIF-519231-CS-INDV

The Government of Belize has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") is for a suitable qualified fulltime PROCUREMENT OFFICER as part of the Project Implementation Unit of the CRESAP within the Belize Social Investment Fund. The Procurement Officer will be primarily responsible for the management of project procurement activities undertaken as part of the CRESAP implementation, conduct the international and national bidding process for goods, non-consultant services, consultant services and civil works; prepare and submit bid evaluation reports, negotiate contracts and make recommendations for awarding contracts, conforming to terms and conditions stipulated in the subsidiary agreement and World Bank Procurement Regulations.

The GOB has appointed the Belize Social Investment Fund (BSIF) as the implementing agency for the project and the BSIF is seeking to recruit an individual to fill the position of Procurement Officer.

The consultancy is expected to be for an initial of Twelve (12) months commencing March 2026. The Procurement Officer will be supervised by the Project Coordinator (PC) of the CRESAP.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be obtained by submitting a request in writing via e-mail to procurement.cresap@sifbelize.org.

The Belize Social Investment Fund now invites eligible individuals ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (such as cover letter, Curriculum Vitae etc.).

Minimum Mandatory Requirements *(Required)

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in Law, Procurement, Business Administration, Public Administration, Finance, or any other field related to this assignment (max 20 points).

General Experience

- Five (5) years' experience working in public or private sector performing tasks that include drafting of reports, chairing of meetings, writing meeting minutes etc. (max 20 points).

If these minimum requirements are not met, candidates will not be considered for the process

Additional Requirements (Desirable)

Specific Experience

- Three or more years working experience at procurement officer level (max 30 points)
- Working experience conducting procurement under strict guidelines of IFIs (e.g. World Bank, IDB, CDB, EU etc.) (max 20 points)
- Experience working in a project environment (max 10 points)

Minimum total points required to be considered for the assignment is 75 points.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" July 2020 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Selection of Individual Consultant method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours, i.e. 0800 to 1600 hours Belize Time.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by **February 18, 2026** at 16:00 hours Belize Time.

Belize Social Investment Fund

Attn: Orlando Coc, Procurement Assistant

P.O. Box 459, 4253 Hummingbird Highway, Building C, Belmopan City, Belize

Telephone +501-822-0239

Email: procurement.cresap@sifbelize.org

National Identification Bill
GOB Launches Consultations for
Development Stage



tively and share their perspectives to help shape a modern, secure, and inclusive National ID System. The mechanisms for public participation will be posted on the Ministry of E-Governance Facebook page. (release)

On February 3, 2026, the Government of Belize successfully hosted the official launch of consultations for the development of the National Identification (ID) Bill. The kick-off session marked the beginning of a collaborative and engaging consultation process designed to guide the drafting of a comprehensive and inclusive National ID Bill.

This important initiative seeks to strengthen identity management, enhance service delivery, and improve citizens' access to social and economic opportunities. The event brought together a diverse range of stakeholders, including representatives from civil society, academia, the private sector, and government institutions.

The session was both informative and highly interactive. Participants engaged in constructive dialogue, sharing initial questions, concerns, recommendations, and key opportunities to support the development of a robust and citizen-centered National ID Framework.

The proposed National ID Bill and supporting regulations aim to:

- Establish a unified and secure legal foundation for identity management.
- Safeguard data privacy and protection for all individuals.
- Define institutional roles, governance structures, and oversight mechanisms.
- Improve access to public services, financial systems, and social protection programs.
- Strengthen national security and administrative efficiency.
- Accelerate digital transformation across government and private sector services.

Over the coming weeks, additional consultations, engagements, and awareness activities will be carried out. The Government of Belize encourages all stakeholders, including the general public, to participate ac-

ANNOUNCEMENT of Swearing-in Ceremony
Office of the Chief Justice
National Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee
Criminal and Civil Mediators of the Senior Courts of Belize

Belize City, Belize- Chief Justice Honourable Mde. Louise Esther Blenman of the Senior Courts of Belize is pleased to announce the upcoming swearing-in ceremony for another cohort of court- connected Criminal and Civil mediators to the Senior Courts of Belize. The ceremony will be held on 20th February 2026, at the High Court, Treasury Lane, Belize City, Belize, at 10:00 a.m.

The appointment of these new mediators represents yet another significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to strengthen Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms within the justice system of Belize. These individuals have successfully undergone

the requisite training and certification processes to qualify as mediators and will play a crucial role in facilitating the fair, efficient, and confidential resolution of criminal and civil matters, without the need for prolonged litigation.

The swearing-in ceremony will be presided over by the Chief Justice, Honourable Mde. Louise Esther Blenman, who reaffirms the commitment of the National Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee (NADRC), a committee within the Office of the Chief Justice and the Senior Courts of Belize, to the continued transformation of the judiciary through the expansion and effective use of ADR processes in Belize. (release)



CENTRAL BANK
of BELIZE



CAREER OPPORTUNITY

ASSISTANT CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR

The Central Bank invites qualified individuals to join its Internal Audit Department.

The Internal Audit Department is an independent, objective assurance and consulting function that evaluates and improves the Central Bank's internal controls, risk management, and governance processes. The Assistant Chief Internal Auditor conducts specialized audits and leads the assigned team in assessing internal controls, effectively communicating findings and recommendations, and monitoring responses and ameliorative actions.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assist the Chief Internal Auditor in the strategic planning and management of the Internal Audit Department.
- Provide guidance and performance management to the audit team, ensuring quality control assurance on audit engagement planning, performance, and reporting.
- Communicate audit findings and recommendations to management.
- Oversee the Internal Audit Department's continuous monitoring activities to give assurance on the integrity of critical Central Bank processes and systems.
- Monitor and validate the implementation of audit recommendations and management action plans.
- Coordinate and provide training and development opportunities to ensure the audit team meets the Internal Audit Continued Professional Development (CPD) standard.
- Provide expert consultation on the development and installation of systems and procedures and maintenance of a strong and effective control environment.
- Plan, manage, and perform assigned specialized audits.
- Lead investigations into suspected fraudulent activities and report findings to the Chief Internal Auditor.
- Perform other duties necessary to fulfill the requirements of the audit function as assigned.

The applicants should possess the following:

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- A recognized professional certification in accounting (CPA/ ACCA) and/or internal auditing (CIA, CISA), with
 - A master's degree in accounting, banking, or finance from a recognized university, with at least three (3) years of relevant experience; **or**
 - A bachelor's degree in accounting, banking, or finance with at least six (6) years of relevant experience.

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge of the Central Bank of Belize Act, the Domestic Banks and Financial Institutions Act, internal control processes, auditing, and accounting principles; investigative and reporting skills; ability to apply relevant methodologies and tools effectively to audit engagements; computer literate and proficient in Microsoft Office Suite.

COMPETENCIES

- Communication, Analytical Ability, Job knowledge, Organisational Ability, Problem Solving/Judgement, Quality of Output, Decision Making, Delegation and Empowerment, Strategic Management, Coaching and Development

Submit the following documents by **Wednesday, 11 February 2026:**

- CBB Employment Application Form (Available online)
- Curriculum Vitae
- Two (2) current references (Both must be professional references)
- Copies of university transcripts, degrees, and any other personal certificates

Applications should be addressed to:

Manager, Human Resources Department
Central Bank of Belize
P.O. Box 852 or Gabourel Lane
Belize City, BELIZE

Ref: Assistant Chief Internal Auditor- Internal Audit Department

Email: hr@centralbank.org.bz or online at www.centralbank.org.bz
(All applications will be held in strict confidence.)

VACANCY NOTICE
NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR I
High Court of Belize

Salary / Pay Scale: Pay scale 19 - \$36,554 x 1511 - \$65,263.00 per annum

The Senior Courts of Belize invites applications for the post of Network Administrator I. This position supports the modernization of the Judiciary by developing and managing secure, reliable network infrastructure across all judicial districts, including VPNs, firewalls, and judiciary-wide IT phone systems.

Key Responsibilities (Summary):

- Manage and update the Judiciary’s website.
- Plan and coordinate installation of in-house and remote network hardware/software across the organization.
- Design and implement strategic plans to ensure network capacity meets current and future requirements.
- Develop and maintain policies, procedures, and training for network administration and appropriate use.
- Test and monitor network performance; produce statistics and reports.
- Ensure optimal operation of routers, switches, hubs, UPSs, standby generators, and related network equipment.
- Maintain effectiveness of security solutions (firewalls, anti-virus, intrusion detection/prevention) and monitor security threats.
- Research and recommend network products, services, protocols, and standards; support procurement and development.
- Assist with vendor/contractor negotiations to secure network products and services.
- Administer network equipment and upgrades; define and document network infrastructure and configurations.
- Establish backup/restore strategy and tested recovery plans; implement redundancy planning.
- Maintain asset inventory and documentation; establish service level agreements with end users.
- Support 24/7 availability of critical IT infrastructure and applications.

Qualifications:

- Essential: Bachelor’s degree in computer science / information technology (or related field) with five (5) years’ experience supporting computer networks; OR Bachelor’s Degree and at least two (2) appropriate certifications (e.g., CCNA, Security+) with minimum seven (7) years’ experience supporting computer networks.
- Desirable: Bachelor’s degree in computer science / information technology (or closely related field) with seven (7) years’ experience supporting computer networks; AND at least two (2) appropriate certifications (e.g., CCNA, Security+).

Experience (Preferred):

- Installation of microcomputer hardware/software; configuration and administration of local and wide area networks.
- Four (4) years’ experience installing microcomputer hardware/software and administering
- LAN/WAN, including two (2) years implementing IT projects.
- Managing and configuring enterprise-wide LANs, WANs, VPNs, and related technologies.
- Supervisory capability is an asset.

Key Competencies / Skills:

- Strong knowledge of legacy and current innovations in information systems; network and PC operating systems.
- Hands-on installation/troubleshooting of servers, routers, bridges, switches, hubs, modems, and NICs.
- Knowledge of networking topologies; protocols/standards (ISO); security deployment/administration; server applications.
- Structured network cabling/patching experience; ability to research networking issues/products; knowledge of VOIP technologies.
- Strong leadership and personnel management skills; excellent written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills.
- Highly self-motivated, detail-oriented, analytical and solution-focused; strong customer service orientation; able to prioritize under pressure; collaborative team worker.

How to Apply:

All applications must be submitted by email and addressed to the following emails:

DPatterson@registry.gov.bz dpatterson@belizejudiciary.org
KBrooks@registry.gov.bz kbrooks@belizejudiciary.org

Deadline for Submission: 28 February 2026
Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

People-First Leadership in Albert

Councillor Kaya Cattouse and Albert BYM Deliver Support to Primary School

In a strong show of grassroots leadership and community-centered action, PUP Standard Bearer in the 2025 Elections for the Albert Constituency and still serving, Kaya Cattouse, together with members of the Albert Belize Youth Movement (BYM), carried out a school outreach initiative focused on supporting primary school students across the constituency.



Cattouse was joined by BYM members Shynia Wilson, Kameron Tillett, and Nayeem McKay as they visited three primary schools within the constituency - James Garbutt SDA School, Calvary Temple Primary School, and Wesley Lower School - where food items were distributed to students.

The initiative is part of ongoing efforts by the Albert PUP team to address real, immediate needs within the constituency, particularly those affecting children and families. Principals at all three schools warmly welcomed the delegation, expressing appreciation for the gesture and the continued engagement with their institutions.

During the visits, Cattouse emphasized that supporting children goes be-

yond politics and speaks directly to the kind of representation Albert deserves. “Too many families are feeling the pressure, and our children are often the ones most affected. If we are serious about leadership, then we must show up, not just during elections, but consistently and meaningfully,” she said.

Members of the Albert BYM also underscored the importance of youth involvement in community development, noting that young leaders have a responsibility to be present and active in solving problems at the local level.

The food distribution was well received by both school administrators and students, reinforcing the importance of partnerships between political leaders, youth groups, and educational institutions. The visit also highlighted a broader vision for the Albert Constituency, one centered on people, service, and practical solutions.

Cattouse reaffirmed her commitment to working alongside community members, the City Council, and the Government of Belize to uplift Albert, stating that initiatives such as these are only the beginning of a larger, people-first agenda for the constituency.



INVITATION TO BID

Institution: MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, & SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE.

Tender: Prefabricated Wooden Office Building & Concrete Foundation

The Government of Belize, acting through the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Solid Waste Management (MSDCCSWM), hereby invites sealed quotations from eligible and qualified companies for the design (where required), supply, fabrication, delivery, construction, installation, and commissioning of one (1) prefabricated wooden office building, inclusive of an elevated reinforced concrete foundation system, in accordance with the requirements set out in the Request for Quotation (RFQ).

General Project Description:

- § Procurement of one (1) prefabricated wooden office building measuring 40 ft x 20 ft, intended for administrative and office space.
- § The building shall be installed on a reinforced concrete foundation designed to elevate the structure and provide a minimum clear vertical clearance of nine (9) feet beneath the building.
- § The elevated foundation shall be designed to allow for a future enclosed office or functional space to be constructed below the prefabricated building.
- § An attached floor plan of the prefabricated building forms an integral part of this RFQ and shall guide internal layout, access points, room configuration, and functional requirements

Scope of Works:

- Includes, but is not limited to the following, of which the Contractor shall be fully responsible for coordination between foundation works and building installation:
- a) Detailed site assessment and foundation layout.
 - b) Design (where required), construction, and completion of a reinforced concrete foundation system in accordance with Belize’s minimum building standards.
 - c) Supply, fabrication, transportation, delivery, offloading, installation, testing, and commissioning of the prefabricated wooden office building.
 - d) The installation of the prefabricated structure securely anchored to the reinforced concrete foundation.
 - e) Construction of all associated structural, architectural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, accessibility, and safety components.
 - f) Final inspection, testing, and handover of a fully operational and structurally sound facility.

For a complete Request for Quotation document, which details further important requirements as well as Submission Procedures, kindly request via email at procurement.officer@environment.gov.bz

Deadline for submission: February 13th, 2026

The Voice of the Common Man
BTL/SPEEDNET MERGER
A CLASSIC CASE OF ECONOMIES OF SCALE:
KNOW THE FACTS

By Hilly Bennett

The BTL/SPEEDNET proposed acquisition /merger has become a dominating societal conversation, convoluted by political leveraging and intentional disinformation. Notwithstanding, an existing BTL release issued on June 4, 2025, stated that “In light of media speculation on potential consolidation in broadband, cable, and mobile sector, BTL clarifies that such discussions are not new-locally or globally.”

The release revealed that since 2018 under the United Democratic Party (UDP) administration led by the Master of deception and secret deals, Dean Oliver Barrow, discussions and exchanges between BTL and operators had considered an ‘amalgamation’. Tracy and the UDP, the Unions and the independent Senators must be reminded that Dean Barrow paid approximately 648 million dollars for a company (BTL) that was valued at 226 million dollars, with the workers’ SSB contribution of some 29 million dollars invested in Barrow’s secret deal with Michael Ashcroft. At the current BTL payout in dividends, SSB would not be able to recoup

its initial investment in the Barrow deal. Insofar as the criticism of a monopoly today, the Leader of the Opposition, Tracy Taeger-Panton got all wrapped around the Barrow/BTL monopoly.

It was the vision of Belize’s telecom provider to leverage its market position in the pursuit of strategic opportunities that would strengthen and diversify the company’s revenue base, which was aligned with the evolution journey from “telco to techno”. Importantly, the release noted that “any potential future consolidation would be guided by the goal of strengthening our National Telecom to the benefit of the people of Belize.”

The rationale for the acquisition /merger at that time and continues to be the guiding factor for the benefits in moving the company forward in the competitive marketplace, remains relevant. “In any economy small or large, reducing unnecessary duplication and maximizing the use of under-utilized capacity in the capital-intensive industry unlocks efficiencies.” Those efficiencies would result in the benefit of all stakeholders, in-

Continued on Pg 20



INVITATION TO BID



Institution: MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE & SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE.

Tender: **SUPPLY OF TWENTY-FOUR (24) ROLLS OF POLYETHENE DUAL-LAYER COATING TARP**
TOTALLING AN AREA OF 24,000 SQM

The Government of Belize (GOB), through the Belize Solid Waste Management Authority within the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change & Solid Waste Management, invites qualified and reputable companies to submit proposals for the twenty-four (24) rolls of Polyethene Dual-Layer Coating Tarp totaling an area of 24,000 sqm.

Bidding Details: The full bidding document, which includes detailed specifications of the required Polyethene Dual-Layer Coating Tarp and instructions for the submission process, can be obtained by sending a request to:

- Email: procurement.officer@environment.gov.bz
- CC: procurement.asst@environment.gov.bz

Deadline for Submission: February 20th, 2026, 10:00 AM

Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered. The Ministry reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without obligation or explanation.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF BELIZE A.D. 2025

CLAIM NO. 325 OF 2025

BETWEEN:

(ARICELA AGUILAR	CLAIMANT
(	
(AND	
(	
(ALCIDES AGUILAR	DEFENDANT

TO: THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT

TAKE NOTICE that an Application for the Sale of Parcel 227, Block 1 in the Carolina/Calcutta Registration Section is to be heard on the 27th day of February, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. before Justice Mohamed Mansoor at the High Court of Belize.

AND it has been Ordered that service of the application in the said action on the Defendant be effected by this advertisement.

TAKE NOTICE that in default of your attending or challenging same, the said Claimant may proceed therein and an order may be granted in your absence.

DATED the 6th day of February, 2026.

ESTEVAN PERERA & COMPANY LLP
Attorneys-at-Law for the Claimant
Alpha Business Centre
No. 2118 Guava Street
Belize City, Belize

PER: ESTEVAN A. PERERA



INVITATION TO BID



Institution: MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE & SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE.

Tender: **SUPPLY OF GAS CHROMATOGRAPHY-MASS SPECTROMETRY LABORATORY EQUIPMENT & ACCESSORIES**

The Government of Belize (GOB), through the Department of the Environment (DOE) within the Ministry of Sustainable Development Climate Change &; Solid Waste Management, invites qualified and reputable companies to submit proposals for the **supply and delivery of GCMS laboratory equipment and accessories.**

Bidding Details:

The full bidding document, which includes detailed specifications of the required equipment and instructions for the submission process, can be obtained by sending a request to:

- Email: procurement.officer@environment.gov.bz
- CC: UrbinaSS@qobmail.gov.bz

Deadline for Submission: February 20th, 2026, 10:00 AM

Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered. The Ministry reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without obligation or explanation.

The Voice of the Common Man

BTL/SPEEDNET MERGER

A CLASSIC CASE OF ECONOMIES OF SCALE:

KNOW THE FACTS

Continued from Pg

cluding the consumers, and would also create savings that could improve services, expand its reach to the customer base of underserved and unserved communities. This would in turn bring a better value to consumers and employees and a higher return for the over 1,500 small or minority shareholders.

In October of 2025, there were suggestions that Belize Telemedia Limited (BTL) was considering the acquisition of Speednet Communications Limited (SMART). A formal proposal for the acquisition was presented to the Cabinet on January 20, 2026. Thereafter there has been a slew of opposition and scrutiny from the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), the unions including the National Trade Union Congress of Belize (NTUCB) and the independent senators.

According to the arguments presented by BTL, the proposed acquisition of SPEEDNET is designed to create significant economies of scale. This would occur through the reduction of operational inefficiencies, consolidating infrastructure, and maximizing existing network capacity. BTL have proffered that with the current competition, it has resulted in wasteful duplication (redundancy) of infrastructure such as multiple fibre optic lines, and towers in the same areas. BTL is suggesting the **repurposing of 43 cell sites** to increase service in areas where neither provider has coverage. 2 in Corozal, 3 in Orange Walk, 8 in the Belize District, 4 in the Cayo District, 2 in the Stann Creek District and **24 in the Toledo District**. Noting, a merger would allow for a more streamlined network and would lower the maintenance costs.

Regarding operational efficiency, the merger would allow BTL to consolidate corporate functions and eliminate redundant roles. One of the greatest indicators of economies of scale is significantly lowering the cost per consumer, which BTL's Chairman, Mark Lizarraga told the media in an interview that BTL has the existing capacity to absorb SPEEDNET's customers with "virtually very little increase in cost". Interestingly, according to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Belize Telemedia Limited, Ian Cleverly, "BTL and SpeedNet have both suffered from the race to the bottom, BTL and SpeedNet have been competing for the same traffic. And naturally, they've been competing on volume and rates." The merger aims to recapture roughly \$40 to \$50 million in lost foreign exchange from roaming rates over five years, resulting in the retention of necessary revenue. Proponents for the merger suggest that the "race to the bottom" has been hurting both BTL and SMART, and the acquisition would make BTL more sustainable in the competitive telecommunication marketplace.

The consolidation will also deliver realized gains for investors. The **revenues are projected to increase from \$167 million to \$207 million** reflecting enhanced operational performance and growth potential. Information (data) revealed that the dividends per share are projected to increase by 216.67 percent, which means that the payout to the shareholders will translate to a tripling effect. One of the investors, the **Social Security Board of Belize, will benefit from the improved return on investment via the increased dividend payout**, which will sustain its long-term financial obligation, especially to all insured Belizean workers, including the

common man and woman.

Although the telecommunication industry of Belize faces no imminent collapse, if the merger fails, BTL argues that the acquisition is a "survival tactic" against foreign competition like Starlink, enabling efficiency. Consequently, it is imperative

that BTL engages in investment, especially investment in what is known as the last-mile broadband features, particularly in the fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) and 5G wireless access (FWA) that would allow BTL to compete with and surpass Starlink's performance. Considering that high-speed fibre remains the "gold standard", which provides faster, consistent, and cheaper long-term service in underserved and unserved communities.

Forget the noise, forget the political leveraging, plain and simple-KNOW THE FACTS!

Job Vacancy

Assistant Legal Secretary needed in Belize City law office. Some experience in the legal field and knowledge of Microsoft programs necessary.

Send resume to:

sabcolaw1@hotmail.com.



CENTRAL BANK
of BELIZE



CAREER OPPORTUNITY

LABOUR RELATIONS OFFICER

The Central Bank invites qualified individuals to join its Human Resources Department.

The Labour Relations Officer supports the Central Bank's labour relations functions by serving as a liaison between management, union representatives, and external labour stakeholders. The role ensures the effective administration of collective bargaining agreements, manages union-related activities, and oversees investigations, reporting, and disciplinary processes in accordance with established Bank policies and Belize labour laws.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide guidance to management on the interpretation and implementation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- Assist in the negotiation of bargaining unit agreements by conducting market data analysis and engaging with bargaining unit representatives.
- Coordinate and provide logistical and administrative support for union-related meetings, documentation, and compliance requirements.
- Act as a liaison to facilitate effective communication and timely resolution of labour matters between management, unions, and external stakeholders.
- Liaise with the Belize Labour Department to ensure compliance with applicable labour laws and regulations.
- Conduct or support investigations into policy breaches, grievances, and disciplinary matters in collaboration with the Human Resources Department.
- Implement tracking systems for union matters to improve monitoring and processing efficiency.
- Maintain professional relationships with trade unions, labour authorities, and industry counterparts to support compliance and information sharing.
- Perform other duties consistent with the functions of the department.

The applicant should possess the following:

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- A minimum qualification of a bachelor's degree in Labour and Employment Relations, Human Resources Administration, Industrial Relations, or a related field from a recognized university. Relevant experience would be an asset.

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

- Familiarity with the Central Bank of Belize Act, Domestic Banks and Financial Institutions Act, International Banking Act, Credit Union Acts, Moneylenders Act, National Payment System Act, and the Money Laundering and Terrorism (Prevention) Act and their accompanying regulations; Strong knowledge and experience with the Labour Laws of Belize, Belize Social Security Laws, and Income Tax Laws; Strong knowledge of collective bargaining processes and investigative procedures; Excellent communication, negotiation, and interpersonal skills; Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite.

COMPETENCIES

- Initiative, Interpersonal Relations, Organizational Ability, Analytical Ability, Communication, Customer Focus, Job Knowledge, Quality of Output, Deportment, Problem Solving/Judgement.

Submit the following documents by **Wednesday, 11 February 2026**:

- Central Bank Employment Form (available online)
- Curriculum Vitae
- Copies of university transcripts, degrees, and any other personal certificates
- Two (2) current references (at least one must be from a previous or current employer)

Applications should be addressed to:

Manager, Human Resources Department
Central Bank of Belize
P.O. Box 852 or Gabourel Lane
Belize City, BELIZE

Ref: Labour Relations Officer- Human Resources Department

Email: hr@centralbank.org.bz or online at www.centralbank.org.bz
(All applications will be held in strict confidence.)

VACANCY NOTICE
CYBERSECURITY SPECIALIST
High Court of Belize

Salary: Pay Scale 21 - \$39,821 x 1718 - \$72,463.00 per annum

The Cybersecurity Specialist is responsible for developing, implementing and managing security measures to safeguard the Senior Courts of Belize’s digital infrastructure, information systems and sensitive data. The role is critical to identifying threats, responding to incidents, ensuring compliance with applicable standards and maintaining confidentiality, integrity and availability of court information systems.

Responsibilities:

- Monitor networks and systems for security breaches, suspicious activity and anomalies.
- Investigate and respond to cybersecurity incidents, performing root cause analysis and forensic reporting.
- Develop and enforce security policies, procedures and best practices.
- Install, configure and maintain firewalls, antivirus software and intrusion detection systems (IDS).
- Conduct regular vulnerability assessments, risk analyses and penetration tests.
- Manage user access controls, encryption protocols, and secure data backups.
- Provide cybersecurity awareness training and simulations for court staff and stakeholders.
- Collaborate with the IT team to secure cloud services, case management platforms, and digital courtrooms.
- Ensure system compliance with the Data Protection Act and international standards (e.g., ISO 27001,NIST).
- Document security breaches and recommend improvements to enhance overall security posture.
- Stay current with emerging threats, technologies, and industry trends.

Qualifications:

Education & Certification:

- Bachelor’s Degree in Computer Science, Information Security, Cybersecurity or related field.
- Industry certifications such as CISSP, CEH, CompTIA Security+, CISM or GIAC are highly desirable.

Experience:

- Minimum of three (3) years in cybersecurity, IT security administration, or a related role.
- Demonstrated experience in handling cyber incidents and risk mitigation.

Technical Skills:

- Proficiency in security tools (e.g., SIEM, firewalls, IDS/IPS, antivirus).
- Familiarity with Microsoft 365 security features, Windows Server environments, and cloud platforms.
- Knowledge of networking, encryption, and security protocols (e.g., SSL, VPN, TCP/IP).
- Understanding of regulatory and compliance frameworks (e.g., GDPR, ISO).

Core Competencies:

- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
- High attention to detail and organization skills.
- Ability to work under pressure and handle incidents swiftly and professionally.
- Effective communication and training skills.
- Integrity, confidentiality, and sound judgement.

How to Apply:

All applications must be submitted by email and addressed to the following emails:

DPatterson@registry.gov.bz dpatterson@belizejudiciary.org
KBrooks@registry.gov.bz kbrooks@belizejudiciary.org

Deadline for Submission: 28 February 2026.

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
CONSULTING SERVICES

Country: Belize
Project: Strengthening of Tax Administration Project (STAP)
Loan No.: 4839/OC-BL
Institution: Ministry of Finance
Abstract: Consulting Services

Deadline: February 16, 2026, at 4 p.m. (Belize local time)

The Government of Belize has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), toward the cost of the Strengthening of Tax Administration Project (STAP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) for a Consulting Firm to develop a **Data Governance Strategy and Framework** for the Belize Tax service Department (BTSD).

Specific objectives for this Consultancy:
“To develop and institutionalize a comprehensive Data Governance Strategy and Framework for the BTSD, ensuring that data assets are effectively managed, protected, and utilized to support evidence-based policy formulation, compliance management, and operational efficiency”

The Belize Tax Department under the Ministry of Finance now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consulting Firms should provide the following information:

General Experience:

- The firm should demonstrate a minimum of 5 years' experience in similar assignments: Digital Government or Public Sector ICT Reform
- Demonstrative experience in Institutional Strengthening and Organizational Transformation

Specific Experience:

- The firm must have successfully completed within the last 3 years:
- At least 2 comparable assignments involving the design and/or implementation of:
 - o Data governance frameworks, enterprise data management strategies, or data management operating models aligned with recognized international standards.
 - At least 2 comparable assignments that include change management, organizational transformation, and institutional strengthening components.
 - o Managing resistance to change in public sector organizations.
 - o Embedding new roles, processes, or behavioral practices.
 - o Delivering training and awareness programs to support adoption.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank GN-2350-15 and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the policies.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank GN-2350-15 section 3: 3.3(b) – Quality-Based Selection (QBS),for assignments that have a high downstream impact and in which the objective is to have the best experts.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 8:00 to 5:00 (Monday – Thursday), and 8:00 to 4:30 (Friday).

Expressions of Interest must be submitted in writing no later than **Monday, February 16, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. (local time)**. Submissions may be sent by email to Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz and david.duncan@mof.gov.bz, with “STAP – Data Governance Strategy and Framework” clearly stated in the subject line, or delivered in hard copy to the following address:

Director General
Belize Tax Service Department
Strengthening of Tax Administration Project
Eleanor Hall Building
Chetumal Boulevard, Belize City
Tel: 501-222-4956

For clarifications kindly contact:

Acting Project Coordinator
Project Executing Unit
Strengthening of Tax Administration Project
Eleanor Hall Building
Chetumal Boulevard, Belize City
Tel: 501-222-4956 (ext-421)/E-mail: David.Duncan@mof.gov.bz



MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

BELCAN BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

The Government of Belize (GOB) has applied for financing from the Republic of China (Taiwan) towards the cost of the **Belcan Bridge Replacement Project** and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds to eligible payments under the contract for which this invitation is issued.

- The Scope of Works will include:
- Demolition of Existing Structure
 - Construction of new Bridge Structure
 - Piles Fabrication and Installation
 - Girder Fabrication and Installation
 - Construction of a temporary pedestrian/bicycle/vehicular bridge across the Haulover Creek for the duration of the project. Space must be allowed for the navigation of small vessels.

Qualification requirements include, inter alia:

	Description of criteria	Belcan Bridge
a.	an average annual turnover of at least United States Dollars (US\$) equivalent shown (defined as billing for works in progress and completed) over the last three (3) years;	US\$5.0M
b.	demonstrable capacity to have a cash flow of at least the US\$ equivalent shown (including access to credit); and	US\$1.0M
c.	experience as prime contractor in the construction of at least two assignments of a similar nature and complexity to the proposed project activity within the last ten years with at least the US\$ equivalent value shown (<i>to comply with this requirement, works quoted should be at least 80 percent complete</i>). The similarity shall be based on the physical size, complexity, methods/technology or other characteristics, which includes experience in piling, pier construction, retaining walls, reinforced concrete works, erosion protection and the construction of bridges.	US\$7.0M

This Project is being implemented by the Ministry of Infrastructure Development & Housing (MIDH), Project Execution Unit (PEU). An Engineering Coordinator within the PEU is responsible for the day-to-day management of project activities. Engineering Supervision Consultants will be retained by MIDH to assist with the supervision of this contract.

Construction is expected to start in the first quarter of 2026. The MIDH hereby invites interested contractors in the civil works to be part of this bidding process.

Consideration will be given to local and international firms or joint ventures of firms, who have qualified extensive experience in bridge construction of a similar size and complexity.

Effective **Monday 2 February 2026**, interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the Bidding Documents at the PEU office at the address below, Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm Belize time. A complete hardcopy set of the bidding documents in English may be obtained by interested bidders by submitting a written request or email to the address below. The request must clearly state **“Request for Bidding Documents for the Belcan Bridge Replacement Project**. The hardcopy documents are available for a non-refundable fee of **US\$1,000.00**. Potential bidders who request that hardcopy documents be forwarded to them are required to submit an account number from a local courier agent, which accepts freight collect charges. The MIDH will promptly dispatch the documents but under no circumstances will the Ministry be responsible for late delivery or loss of the documents so transmitted.

A Pre-Bid meeting and site visit shall take place on **Friday 6 February 2026 at 9:00am Belize time**. Bidders shall congregate at the Belcan Bridge site in Belize City.

Bidding Documents must be in English and must be submitted by 10:00 am, Belize time on **Wednesday 4 March 2026**. There are two options for submitting the bidding documents. These are:

- (a) By electronic submission, in PDF format, to the email addresses indicated below. The “Subject” field of the email message must read **“Bidding Documents for the Belcan Bridge Replacement Project**.” The submission will be deemed to have been received at the time that it is received by PEU. The burden of proving receipt of the email will be on the bidder and will not be met solely by a read receipt or sent items report generated by the bidder’s computer; or
- (b) By submission of one original and two hard copies, by hand or by registered mail, in a sealed envelope to the address below. The sealed envelope containing each submission must include the name and address of the bidder and be clearly marked **“Bidding Documents for the Belcan Bridge Replacement Project”**.

Each bid must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the amount of \$200,000.00 Belize Dollars. GOB reserves the right to accept or reject late submissions or to cancel the bidding process. GOB will not be bound to assign any reason for cancelling the bidding process and will not defray costs incurred by bidders in the preparation and submission of the bidding documents. Late bids will be rejected.

Attention: **Mr. Evondale Moody**
Chief Engineer/Engineering Coordinator
Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing
Power Lane
Belmopan
BELIZE C.A.

Tel: +501-828-5221
Email: peu@midh.gov.bz



REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS
Supply and delivery of an ultra-low
temperature freezer for Belize
Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA)

Country: Belize
Name of Project: Climate Resilient and Sustainable
Agriculture Project (CRESAP)
Contract Title: Supply and delivery of an ultra-low
temperature freezer for BAHA
Loan No.: 9347 BE
RFB Reference No.: BZ-SIF-534423-GO-RFQ

- 1. The Government of Belize has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for the procurement of goods for: Supply and delivery of a ultra-low temperature freezer for BAHA.
- 2. The Belize Social Investment Fund now invites sealed Quotations from eligible Suppliers for the procurement of goods for Supply and delivery of an ultra-low temperature freezer for BAHA.

3. List of Goods and Delivery Period

Line Item N°	Description of Goods	Quantity required	Physical unit	Named Place of Destination (for CIP and EXW)	Place of Final Destination (Project Site)	Applicable Incoterms (e.g. CIP, EXW)	Delivery Period from Date of Contract Signature	Delivery Period from Date of Contract Signature (proposed by the bidder)
1	Ultra-low Temperature Freezer	1	Yes	Belize Social Investment Fund, Building C 4253 Hummingbird Highway, Belmopan City, Cayo District	BAHA, Hummingbird Highway, Belmopan City, Cayo District	CIP for imported goods or EXW for supply from within Belize plus inland transportation and other service as defined in "quoted Price (a) (iii).	90 days	

- 4. Bidding will be conducted through national competitive procurement using a Request for Quotations (RFQ) as specified in the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" 2016 ("Procurement Regulations") and is open to all Suppliers as defined in the Procurement Regulations.
- 5. Suppliers interested in receiving the completed Request for Quotation (RFQ) may obtain further information from Belize Social Investment Fund, Ms. Jahnina Reyes, at procurement.cresap@sifbelize.org.
- 6. Quotations must be delivered to the address below on or before 9:00 a.m. on February 27th, 2026. Late quotations will be rejected.
- 7. The address referred to above is:

Belize Social Investment Fund
Attn: Ms. Jahnina Reyes, Procurement Officer
P.O. Box 459, 4253 Hummingbird Highway,
Building C, Belmopan City, Belize
Telephone: +501-822-0239
Email: procurement.cresap@sifbelize.org
cc : jahnina.reyes@sifbelize.org

PCC
Presentation
Meeting

Review of Final Report

February 4, 2026 - Dr. Hon. Lou-
is Zabaneh, Minister of Constitution
and Religious Affairs, Indigenous
Affairs and Transportation, convened
a presentation meeting with the for-
mer Chairs of the People's Constitu-
tion Commission (PCC) as part of the
Government's ongoing review of the
PCC Final Report and its recommen-
dations for constitutional reform.

During the meeting, the former
PCC Chairs presented on the Com-
mission's work and outlined the the-
matic areas and key recommendations
emerging from the constitutional re-
form process. The engagement pro-
vided an important opportunity for
dialogue and clarification as the Min-
istry continues its structured review
of the PCC Final Report. The Minis-
try noted that this meeting is one of
several engagements planned with
the PCC Executive as it advances the
review and assessment of the recom-
mendations.

The meeting was also attended by
Chester Williams, Chief Executive
Officer; Ginée Neal, Director of Con-
stitution and Religious Affairs; Anna
Loague, Director of Policy, Plan-
ning and Research; and former PCC
Chairs Mr. Anthony Chanona, Mr.
Arturo Lizarraga, Senator Glenfield
Dennison, Mr. Josh Pott, and Ms. Ma-
ria Zabaneh. (release)

CALL
280-8385 or
EMAIL:
[belizetimesadvertisement@
yahoo.com](mailto:belizetimesadvertisement@yahoo.com)
To place
advertisements in
the Belize Times
Newspaper

Curbing
the Cost
of Living

HEALTHCARE
FOR ALL

PUBLIC HOSPITALS
ARE FREE IN
BELIZE

FROM
FREE
PUBLIC HOSPITALS
TO
EXPANDED
NHI COVERAGE
PLAN BELIZE 2.0
IS MAKING
QUALITY HEALTHCARE
MORE ACCESSIBLE
TO EVERY
BELIZEAN

#planBelize2.0

LIQUOR
LICENSE
NOTICES

Notice is hereby given that **Enna G. Ek**
is applying for a **Malt & Cider Liquor
License** to be operated at "**L & B Cool
Spot**" located on Texas Rd., Scotland
Halfmoon Village, Belize District un-
der the Intoxicating Liquor License
Ordinance Revised Edition 1980.

Notice is hereby given that **Jean Bar-
rera** is applying for a **Malt & Cider
Liquor License** to be operated at "**One
For The Road**" located at 24 ¼ Miles
P.G. Hwy., Biscayne Village, Belize Dis-
trict under the Intoxicating Liquor Li-
cense Ordinance Revised Edition 1980.

Notice is hereby given that **Elizabeth
Young** is applying for a **Publican
Special Liquor License** to be operated
at "**Fender's Club**" located at # 43
Handyside Street, Belize City, Belize
District under the Intoxicating Liquor Li-
cense Ordinance Revised Edition 1980.

Notice is hereby given that **Juliet Y.
Edwards** is applying for a **Beer Liquor
License** to be operated at "**Yolanda's
Kitchen**" located at # 46 East Canal
Street, Belize City, Belize District un-
der the Intoxicating Liquor License
Ordinance Revised Edition 1980.

Notice is hereby given that **Paulita Y.
Teyul** is applying for a **Beer Liquor
License** to be operated at "**Bri's Shop**"
located at # 179 Green Street, Bela-
ma Ph. IV, Belize City, Belize District
under the Intoxicating Liquor License
Ordinance Revised Edition 1980.

Notice is hereby given that **Charles
J. Smith** is applying for a **Publican
Special Liquor License** to be operated
at "**Legacy Chillspot**" located at # 17
Farmer's Market, Belize City, Belize Dis-
trict under the Intoxicating Liquor Li-
cense Ordinance Revised Edition 1980.

Notice is hereby given that **Alexander
Babb** is applying for a **Restaurant
Liquor License** to be operated at
"**Carmita's Fast Food**" located at # 1
Regent Street, Belize City, Belize Dis-
trict under the Intoxicating Liquor Li-
cense Ordinance Revised Edition 1980.

Notice is hereby given that **Ricar-
do Alfredo Perez** is applying for a
Beer Liquor License to be operat-
ed at "**Mally Shop**" located in San
Narciso Village, Corozal District un-
der the Intoxicating Liquor License
Ordinance Revised Edition 1980.

VACANCY
NOTICES

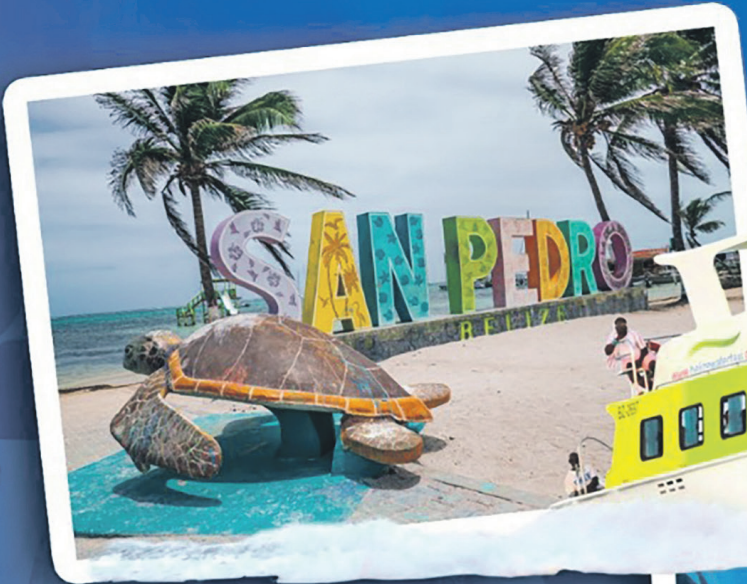
Vacancy exist for a Electrician
Technician at J & Y Cement Block
Factory in Belize City. Visit # 122
Mahogany Street Ext., Belize
City, Belize for more information.

Vacancy exist for a Customer Elec-
tronics Repair Technician at Kim's
Fonto Shop located at # 7386 An-
telope Street Ext., Belize City. Vis-
it location for more information.

smart!
Bringing People Together

Smart
TRIO
GETAWAY

Every New Sign up gets a chance to win
Winner to be announced on April 10th, 2026



**3-Day / 2-Night
Hotel Accommodation
in San Pedro**

**+\$500
CASH**

**Round Trip for 3
& Snorkel Trip for 3**



THREE FRIENDS • ONE ISLAND • ZERO STRESS

For more info www.smart-bz.com or dial 1090 or 670-1096

